

Winter tourism alternatives
– braving the cold in Beijing.

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The 700-year-old Drum Tower
comes back to life, beating in
the New Year.

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“I will dance until the day I
can’t move,” said Teng Aimin, a
dancer from the Beijing Modern
Dance Company.

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Warm Response for Chilly Performance

By Shan Jinliang

Shrugging off the evening chill, the Czech National Radio Symphony Orchestra performed jacketless at Beijing's Great Hall of the People last Saturday.

Except for the conductor and the solo pianist, the male musicians wore plain white shirts and black ties, while the women dressed in dark skirts, rather than the more usual formal evening dress.

The Czech orchestra arrived in Beijing the previous week for a New Year's concert, only to find that 10 of their 52 pieces of baggage, containing scores, a number of percussion instruments and their performance outfits had gone missing. The whereabouts of the suitcases was still unknown yesterday, according to Swissair's Beijing office.

The moment the loss was discovered, Swissair realized the severity of the matter and began a worldwide search for the missing luggage, said Wang Jin, resident conductor of the orchestra.

At the same time, the concert organizer, China Performing Arts Agency moved to overcome the problems posed by the disappearance: borrowing musical instruments from the China Nationalities Orchestra and China Symphony Orchestra and tracking down copies of the scores from the Central Conservatory of Music. The musician's outfits proved a rather more difficult problem however. Finally the agency had to simply buy white shirts and black ties for the entire orchestra.

Last weekend's concerts went ahead as scheduled, and an explanation of the circumstances under which the orchestra was performing bought a wave of applause from the audience.

Although the program had to be modified slightly, the concert was hailed as a great success. "The artists felt very relaxed in their performance, and the spectators were more than satisfied," said Cao Wei, strategy and media director of the China Performing Arts Agency (CPAA).

"It was really a rare case for Swissair. Though every airline may lose one or two pieces of baggage, they generally are found in one or two days," said Wang Shuangqing, deputy manager of Swissair in Beijing. Wang said the airline fears the suitcases may have been stolen in Prague, the Czech capital, or in Zurich, Switzerland, or shipped to a wrong destination. Wang said they were still searching for them and would present the latest information to the public.



The Czech orchestra minus dinner suits

Photo by Cui Jun

Liu Xuan Named Gold Ambassador

By Shan Jinliang

Olympic champion Liu Xuan has been named "Gold Ambassador" by the World Gold Council (WGC).

Liu, balance beam gold medallist at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, has made 15-second and 30-second TV commercials with the slogan "Grow with Gold".

WGC China manager Wang Lixin said apart from her national fame, Liu's image of warmth and her struggle for success links the image of gold to the crowning moment in life.

Asked if there was a link between the commercial and China's opening of its gold market, Wang said there was no direct link, but added, "we always value the Chinese mainland market, as it is the fourth largest gold market in the world, and it is still growing steadily."



Photo courtesy WGC

EDITOR: LIU FENG DESIGNER: PANG LEI



More and more young Beijingers are hitting the slopes this winter

Photo by Chen Bai

By Zhang Xiaoxia

Driving into town along the Airport Expressway, visitors to Beijing are greeted with a series of new billboards promoting ski resorts around Beijing. Winter sports are all the rage this year, and the city has witnessed a flurry of new resorts opening in the past month.

The battle for a slice of the snow sports cake is in full swing all around Beijing. Almost every mountain area has a snow resort, big or small, north or south. On December 22 alone, three new resorts opened, including the much vaunted Huaibei and Nanshan.

Gold mine in the making

Investors believe skiing services have the potential to provide huge profits with only limited investment. Statistics backs their confidence.

According to the estimation of Zhang Lixin, General Manager of Beijing Huaibei International Ski Resort, his resort may accommodate 30 to 50 thousand skiers this season. If each skier spends an average of 200 yuan, this represents a turnover of 6 to 10 million yuan. Huaibei charges 90 yuan for one hour of skiing, which

includes ski and boot hire.

Song Wennian of Nanshan Ski Village is even more optimistic. He believes there are 400 thousand potential skiers in Beijing. If each one spends 1,000 yuan for the entire skiing season, the total ski market in Beijing will be worth 400 million yuan annually.

Among the names of investors in Nanshan, that of Liu Yongxing, the richest man in China last year, according to Forbes magazine, stands out. Liu holds 30% of the shares in Nanshan and sees the investment as a trial for the tourism market.

An analysis of the market from the Chinese Academy of Social Science shows an exciting picture. Investors all believe that managers, management personnel, private enterprise owners and technical personnel, representing the highest paid sectors of Chinese society are their potential customers. If only one out of every 1,000 of them takes up skiing, the cake will be huge.

Long way before profits roll in

Most investors in ski resorts recognize that the Chinese skiing services market is still in its infancy.

Amateur skiing in China didn't really get going until 1996, when the Winter Asiad was held at Yabuli, a snow resort deep in northwest China's Heilongjiang province. In 1998, tour groups from Beijing and Guangdong were led to snow resorts for amateur skiing. The dam really started to burst last year however, when Shijinglong snow resort at Miyun was crowded in snow all season.

Nevertheless, Beijing's snow resorts are still in the amateur league when compared with those in western countries according to Wang Zhonghou, former president of Yabuli Snow Resort, particularly countries like Switzerland and Austria.

None of the seven snow resorts around Beijing can be said to have the advantage of scale. To foster the market is the primary goal; about this, Lu Jian is clear. Lu is the founder of Yabuli Snow Resort, the first snow resort in China and president of the newly opened Nanshan resort.

Lu hopes to make the so-called noble sport available to ordinary people, and has set prices at Nanshan to be the lowest in Beijing; 90 yuan per day for members. Competitors

described the move as "price sniping" and many believe a price war is looming.

The price trap

Nanshan's low prices are forcing competitors to react. The economist Li Yining once suggested that price wars might be the most direct way to beat competitors, while the downside is that the winner invariably loses the ability to make technical improvements and deliver after-sales services. Chinese TV producers went through a bitter price war in the last few years, and the subsequent decline of the industry backs up Li's theory.

If a price war in the ski resort market should break out, the customers, investors and the market will all be the victims, because service will be the first casualty.

Business rules are crucial for the newly born market. The Chinese Ski Association is reportedly moving to regulate the market, however no details are presently available. "The rules from the authorities always lag behind the market," says Song Wennian. "In the absence of rules, the market will determine them itself."

Beijing Olympiad Woos Global Partners

By Xiao Rong

Beijing is winning worldwide support because of the huge market potential of the 2008 Olympic Games, although the total budget of the event reaches 1.625 billion U.S. dollars.

Up till now, the NBC Television Network has signed with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for a television relay agreement. Four international companies: Coca Cola, Kodak, Sch-

lumbergerSema and Swatch have also become partners of the sixth iteration of The Olympic Partner (TOP) program of IOC, which is the first time for an Olympiad to gain support from four partners seven years in advance, said the Beijing Organizing Committee for the 29th Olympic Games (BOCOG) at its first press conference last week after its establishment on December 13.

Being a global partner pro-

gram of IOC, TOP invites world famous companies to support the Olympics every four years. 49% of the profits of the Olympics television relay and a proportion of the TOP program income will be used to hold the 2008 Olympics, according to IOC rule.

BOCOG said that besides the subsidy provided by central and local government, 80% of the budget would have to be gained through marketing. A detailed mar-

keting program will be launched by the end of 2002 or in early 2003 so that the agreement signing between BOCOG and the main supporter will be completed before the 2004 Athens Olympic Games.

The marketing of the 2008 Olympic Games will be globally oriented, which means foreign companies will share equal opportunities with domestic companies, said Wang Wei, secretary general of BOCOG. He suggested

domestic companies should be fully prepared to seize this unique opportunity to enlarge their marketing shares.

The revenue of the marketing program of BOCOG comes mainly from the following aspects: television relaying, subsidies (TOP or domestic support), providers, donations, charters, souvenirs, cultural activities (torch relay race), tickets and other sources of income.

Website for Trials Involving Foreigners Opened

By Xiao Rong

China's first website dealing with trials in commercial and maritime affairs involving foreigners was set up on January 1.

Sponsored by the No.4 court of the Supreme People's Court, the website also gained support from local People's Court.

Notice of trials from local courts in Shanghai, Shandong, Fujian and Guangzhou can be seen on the latest bulletin of the website on the first day. Written judgements of the courts from Beijing, Guangdong and Shanghai are also everywhere in the latest Court Verdict.

An interface able to deal in complex Chinese characters and the English language has also been opened for the convenience of overseas Chinese and Chinese from Hong Kong and Macau.

"With the operation of the website, the world can learn about trials involving foreigners in China, which means the transparency rule of WTO will be guaranteed in our judicial trial," said Yu Lingyu of the No.4 court of the Supreme People's Court.

Yu also pointed out that the announcement of the written judgements can exert certain pressure on the court to help improve the trial quality.

Railway Tickets Await Price Hearing

By Xiao Rong

Over 500 consumers have applied up till now to the Chinese Consumer's Association (CCA) competing to be one of the 11 formal consumer representatives of the forthcoming price hearing on railway passenger tickets.

Besides 11 formal consumer representatives, 30 audit representatives will also be selected from the nationwide applicants by CCA and China Price Association. The State Development Planning Commission (SDPC) will undertake the accommodation and transportation expenses of the formal representatives.

The first of its kind in China for railway passenger ticket prices, the hearing will be held in mid January by the SDPC according to the newly released provisional regulations on the hearing of governmental price policy-making.

Just one month ago, on December 8, the 2002 Spring Festival Period Road Passenger Transport Price Hearing of Guangdong province was broadcast live by China Central Television, the first time for a regional price hearing to be aired on national television.

China's First School of Government Set up

By Xiao Rong

The honor of establishing China's first School of Government finally goes to Peking University, indicating that China will cultivate its own academic and professional talents in the field of governmental and public administration.

"The foundation of the school not only meets with the urgent social needs of our country to strengthen governmental and public administration, but also proves to be a reasonable combination of those advantageous subjects of Peking University," said Wang Fuqu, deputy dean of the School of Government of Peking University.

Wang said the modernization of governmental and public administration lies mainly in the modernization of professional talents.

Among the eight departments of the new school, Wang predicted the market potential of the degree program of Master in Public Affairs (MPA) as the greatest. "There are now over eight million employees in the public sector in China waiting to gain MPA, while the annual MPA enrollment number of the designated 24 universities only reaches about 2400."

Criminal Law Amended to Combat Terrorism

By Xiao Rong

Anyone cracking jokes like "There's anthrax in the mail", "I've got a bomb" or "There is poison in the tap water" will be jailed for at least five years according to the third amendment of China's Criminal Law.

The amendment, which was approved by the 25th session of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee last Saturday, strengthens punishments for those who have organized and taken part in acts of terrorism to the maximum of life imprisonment.

Those who seriously disturb social order by making bomb scares, bio-chemical or radiation scares and other terrorism information, or by purposely disseminating fabricated terrorism information, will also be punished with a maximum imprisonment of five years. The punishment may be more severe if serious consequences occur.

The punishment also applies to the behavior of disseminating fake explosive, poisonous, radioactive or infectious materials. The illegal production, sale, transport, store, stealing or robbery of these materials can be sentenced to at least three years of imprisonment and even the death penalty.

"The new amendment was made to combat the emergent terrorist activity of diffusing anthrax powder by mail," said

Hu Kangsheng, vice director of the Law Office of NPC.

In a criminal case involving the posting of letters with a faked anthrax virus in October, suspect Xiao Yongling was sentenced to four years imprisonment by Shanghai No.2 Intermediate People's Court.

Tan Jingsheng, director of the No.1 criminal court of Beijing Supreme People's Court also talked about the terrorist cases in recent years that have been difficult for measurement of penalty because there have been no exact provisions in the former Criminal Law as to the punishment of terrorist activities.

"The law is always one step behind various criminal activities. Only when specific crimes occur, will relevant laws appear," said Yue Cheng, one of China's ten top lawyers, "The main purpose of adding the anti-terrorism clause in the Criminal Law is to exert a deterrent force to minimize terrorist activities instead of simply fighting against terrorism."

As to the fabrication and spread of terrorist speeches, Han Yusheng from the School of Law of Renmin University thinks it reasonable for the Criminal Law to punish such activities, for it's quite distinct from the freedom of speech, and may lead to panic and even social disorder.

Men and Women to Enjoy Equal Reproduction Rights

By Xiao Rong

Wives cannot deprive husbands of their right to be a father since men, as do women, equally enjoy the right of reproduction, according to China's newly announced first Population and Family Planning Law.

The law, to be enforced on September 1 this year, was enacted last Saturday by the 25th session of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee.

The "Birth Adjustment" chapter of the new law stipulates that both husband and wife have equal rights in birth control, which means that neither one of the couple can decide the birth of their child alone.

The reproduction right of men has been a controversial hot topic this year in law and sociology fields. In several disputes regarding the reproduction right of men, local courts in Beijing, Sichuan and Jiangsu

had to deal with cases according to the Marriage Law or the Civil Law which at the time had no exact stipulation on the reproduction right of men.

The emphasis on men's reproduction right, however, may lead to an infringement upon women's right of refusing to give birth, said Mr. Wang from the Weiwei Lawyer Institute.

"Even if men's reproduction right has been protected, the court will not judge on a lawsuit of fulfilling reproduction rights. The law will protect women especially on the basis of equal rights for men and women," said Wu Changzhen, an expert in Marriage Law and also one of the drafters of the Population and Family Planning Law.

"If a couple can only settle reproduction disputes through legal means instead of communicating naturally, they will have to divorce," a judge said.

The wood carving of "Indian Goddess"



Photos by Chen Shuyi

Embassies Present Unique Art Collections

By Xiao Rong

"I'm more impressed by the realistic art style of Asian countries than by the abstract style of European countries," said Chen You, one of the visitors to the "One World, One Home" 2002 Art Collections of Embassies in China.

The exhibition, beginning from last Friday at the China Revolution Museum, was co-sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and China International Exhibition Agency (CIEA) under the support of participating embassies in China.



Visitors attracted by the clock

Over 300 pieces of art collections from over 40 embassies in China, ranging from paintings, sculptures and folk handicrafts have been on display.

"It's like a small international

arts fair. But lots of embassies in China that missed the chance of participating in the exhibition have shown great interest in future cooperation with us," said You Shu, deputy director of the America & Oceania Department of CIEA.

Ms. You revealed that CIEA is planning to organize similar exhibitions this year to introduce more art works around the world to Beijingers. A commemorative album will also be published soon after the fair ends on January 27.

Foreign Tour Groups Get Visa at Beijing Airport

By Liu Jiewei / Ivy Zhang

Beginning from January 1, 2002, the visa section of the Beijing Public Security Bureau based at Beijing airport is handling visa applications submitted by foreign tourist groups to be received by Chinese International Travel Agencies.

72 hours prior to the arrival of foreign tour groups at Beijing airport, travel agencies approved and registered at the China National Tourism Administration will deliver

the group's name list and associated information to related authorities via the Internet.

After being reviewed and sanctioned by the Beijing municipal travel administration and visa sections, the travel agency may apply for a visa at the port of entry visa section by presenting a "Visa Notification Letter" and "Tour Group Visa Application Forms".

The port of entry visa section is supposed to issue visas after the arrival of a tour group or

deliver the visa to the travel agency 24 hours ahead of the group's arrival at port.

Travel agencies may present a Tour Group Visa Form on the plane. At time of entry, the tour group should present its members' passports and Tour Group Visa Application Form to the frontier inspection station.

There's no limit on the number of group members but the time period of a tour group's stay in China will be limited to one month.

Capital Museum Set to Relocate

By Zhao Pu

The Capital Museum, which has resided in the Confucius Temple for 20 years, is now looking forward to moving into its new home.

With a total collection of 250,000 treasures, the Capital Museum was first opened in 1981. Located in the Confucius Temple, the museum's storing and displaying capacities were far from satisfactory.

The construction of a new homestead for the museum kicked off on December 25 2001, with an investment of 780 million yuan estimated to be poured into this project. Occupying an area of 60,000 square meters, the new museum site boasts a wonderful location on west Chang'an Avenue.

Both domestic and international architectural designers combined their talent in bidding for the design of the museum. The masterpiece, jointly designed by the Chinese Academy of Architecture and Design and AREP

(France) succeeded on account of adding a more relaxing touch to the museum.

The design gives the Capital Museum a more friendly approach to visitors than traditional museums. The modern glass structure bathed in sunshine attracts passers-by, welcoming them to visit exhibitions, read, relax, or meet a friend. The design adopts a bronze container as the major part of the museum to display the thousands of treasures.

"We wish to create a museum attractive to everyone, and it will hopefully become a sitting room of the city," remarked Cui Kai, designer of the museum.

The construction is due to be finished in 2003, and the museum will welcome visitors in its new surroundings in 2005.



Computer image of the new Capital Museum

NetEase Resumption up 46%

By James Young

NetEase.com, a leading Internet technology provider in China, announced this Wednesday that it has successfully appealed against the Nasdaq Stock Market's decision to delist the company's American Depositary Shares from the Nasdaq National Market. Trading in the company's shares resumed from that day. The shares climbed up from \$0.65 to \$0.95 on Wednesday.

The continued listing of NetEase's American Depositary Shares will still depend on its ongoing compliance with the applicable Nasdaq listing rules, as well as the additional criteria imposed by the Nasdaq appeal panel that the company will be automatically delisted without opportunity for appeal if it fails to file its annual report on Form 20-F for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2001 with the US Securities and Exchange Commission and Nasdaq on or before its deadline of July 1, 2002.

Haier Launches 200m Insurance JV

By Xu Ying

Leading home appliance maker Haier Group leapt into its first foray in the China insurance market last week with New York Life Insurance. They have agreed to form a 200 million yuan life insurance joint venture.

New York Life Insurance launched the 50-50 venture after it was licensed to carry out mainland operations two weeks ago.

The company's Asia region chief executive, Dennis Pedini, said the venture would develop an agency distribution system and add leverage Haier's customer base.

"We formed the partnership with Haier because it has a highly recognized brand name, a nationwide distribution network and shares our vision," Mr. Pedini said.

The venture, to be called Haier New York Life, has yet to get the green light from the China Insurance Regulatory Commission.

The venture also will help Haier diversify into the financial sector.

Haier New York Life will first operate in a city open to foreign investment and then venture into other cities as Beijing phases out geographical restrictions in line with its WTO commitments.

Mr. Pedini said the partners had yet to work out which city they would launch operation and the pace of business expansion.

Foreign insurance firms have been scrambling to form partnerships with mainland firms in the run-up to China's WTO entry, hoping to gain first-mover advantage.

Zarva Wins IBM Dealership

By Xu Ying

Zarva Technology announced recently that it had signed a cooperative contract with IBM on selling its servers and NAS storage. Meanwhile IBM will provide sales and technical training and some core technologies to Zarva. At the end of 2001,

Zarva set up Distribution Co. to develop its agent business. Zarva's president Zhu Jianqiu said at the press conference, "We have founded a transparent management and sales system. The cooperation between IBM and Zarva will certainly benefit both parts."

Zarva Technology is a well known listed company in China. After five years the company expanded its shares from 33 million to 348 million.

New Rules to Play WTO Game

The first response after China's accession to WTO

By Zhao Yijiang

Some glasses factories in Wenzhou protested to the government of Turkey by the end of last year. It is the first ever response from Chinese enterprises to another country's innovating the "Safeguard Agreement" after China's accession to WTO.

Safeguard measure

Earlier this year, Turkey glasses producer association filed an application to their government for taking safeguard measures. The domestic producer in Turkey claimed that they suffered serious damage caused by importing low price glasses from China.

According to the "Safeguard Agreement" of WTO, a member may restrict imports of a product temporarily (take "safeguard" actions) if its domestic industry is seriously damaged or threatened with serious damage caused by a surge in imports. So the Turkish government accepted the application and began the investigating procedure.

During the period of investigation, the government began to implement a quantitative restriction to glasses imported from China. Since the Turkish government has chosen to apply for the safeguard measure against the import of glasses, it is possible for other countries in the European Union to take the same action. How would it affect the glasses industry in Wenzhou?

"It would be a disaster"

In a phone interview with *Beijing Today*, Mr. Wan, an insider at the Wenzhou Zhongming Glasses Co., said he was shocked when he heard the news. "Our company produces ten million glasses per year, 95% of which is for export and 65% of which export to Europe Union. We and many other companies in Wenzhou are mainly export-oriented. If the door of Turkey or Europe is closed, it would definitely be a disaster."

According to statistics from



Westerners favor Chinese cheap glasses

Photo by Chen Shuyi

Wenzhou glasses Chamber of Commerce, the district has become the largest glasses producing base for export in China.

The export volume is 1.6 billion yuan last year and more than half of it went to Europe.

So if no one responds to the action taken by Turkey, this move would become a fatal blow to the whole industry and more than 1,000 glasses companies in the region.

Changes after WTO entry

All enterprises involved in the case are well poised to protect their rights this time, in com-

parison to previous passivity in domestic industry to engage in actions such as safeguard measures, anti-dumping and anti-subsidy. Wenzhou Foreign Trade Committee and China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Light Industrial Products and Arts Crafts (CCCLA) played an important role during the whole procedure. All the changes result in a series of regulations promulgated by Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC) recently.

According to "Provisions on Responding to Actions of Antidumping

of Export Products" promulgated this October, those who responds to the action who will benefit from it. The relevant enterprises that safeguard the overseas market of export products of the country and protect the legal rights and interests of themselves were encouraged by the government.

The regulation also clarifies the responsibilities of units who should organize and coordinate any response. For example, they should organize the enterprises to retain lawyers and to participate in the hearings held by foreign investigation departments, assist

the enterprises in filling out the investigation questionnaires, assist the enterprises in accepting on-the-spot checks by foreign investigation departments.

Furthermore, the biggest change is that China may request consultation with the Government of Turkey after becoming a WTO member. If both parties fail to reach a mutually satisfactory solution, China could bring an action against Turkey at the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) of the WTO.

Now it's time for China to take on the glasses and play the WTO game with the new rule.

Zhaodaola.com Goes up in Smoke

The Internet portal experienced both good and bad times while good, employees reap the benefits; while bad, they are even refused compensation

By Yang Xiao

When the Internet rockets sky high, employees will be first in line for high rank and pay; and when bankrupt, employees are the first to get the boot.

Entanglement between labor and capital

14 employees from Zhaodaola.com submitted weighty testimonies to Beijing Labor Arbitration Commission last Friday. They want to get a total compensation of 300,000 yuan, worth 2 months salary. The company claimed however that they have no money to satisfy the employees. Since the defendants provided evidence at a delayed date, it seemed impossible that the matter would be resolved by the end of 2001, as the arbitrator had hoped.

Arbitrator Chai says, "The entanglement is not easy to mediate. But the employees have no money to hire a lawyer, therefore arbitration handled by us is the best way. We will see the employees' interests are fairly considered."

One former saleswoman in the company says, "Under heavy pressure, I have had to accept the rigorous terms for compensation valued at 3000 yuan. I should be paid 11,000 yuan according to the Labor Law."

One senior manager who has worked five years but was fired with no compensation said, "CEO Ruby Yu promised to pay one month's salary compensation if the company had residual money. But so far, nothing."

Ruby Yu resigned as CEO on December 20; she finally accepted an interview after postponing for three times.

Yu explains, "I do not support those employees bringing the matter to public attention. All companies involved will not pay our money back, after they noticed we are virtually bankrupt. Therefore, no more money." Yu's boss is Pat Robertson, a well-known billionaire and statesman in the US. He suggested to offer used computers as compensation. "In fact, all employees have signed their names for accepting computers. To tell you the truth, I wish I had some means to pay more compensation," says Yu.

Internet pioneer with bad luck

Zhaodaola.com is one of the first Internet companies in China that set up about five years ago. Robertson invested millions of dollars to set up a B2B company named Global Business Development Network, the former name of Zhaodaola. In March 1999, the company shifted its business mode to web portal under the influence of a better market response from Yahoo, Lycos and AltaVista.

Zhaodaola's golden age began at the start of 2000. Some rumors revealed that lots of potential investors discussed possible capital co-operation with Ruby Yu. Since Pat Robertson hoped to sell the company for over 100 mil-



"I have to collect evidence to struggle for compensation," says one unnamed employee at the gate of Arbitration commission

Photo by Yang Xiao

lion dollars, most investors were scared away. Then came Robertson's investment partner in the company, Malaysian United Industries (MUI) based in Malaysia. At that time Zhaodaola began to prepare list on the Hong Kong GEM market. It spent money on increasing page view, it hired an expensive accountant as CFO and engaged the services of investment bank ING Barings; it also enlarged office space and hired more employees.

The slump in the Nasdaq index that April shattered the dreams of most Internet companies in the world. To Zhaodaola, its plan to list in June failed. "Sohu just listed

in Nasdaq. We missed out," Yu recalled.

After such a setback, Zhaodaola began to cut its labor force from 98 to about 40. The CFO, CTO and even the CEO left their positions. Ruby Yu had already gone back to the US to rest and look for another job; But Robertson raised her from general manager to CEO instead.

China already has five portals listed on the stock market. At a time when Zhaodaola had to find a new profitable mode the idea of e-fashion popped out of Yu's mind. From August, Yu began to spend a large quantity of money in both Beijing and Shanghai until the unexpected 9-11 terrorist attack.

"I was completely unprepared. The investor stopped pouring money into Zhaodaola. I really learnt a lesson from this. I should have had some money to deal with the unexpected."

Learning from bitter experience

Some of the 14 employees have experienced the course of Zhaodaola's life, from the birth, the growth, to the death. The aforementioned senior manager lay all responsibility at Ruby Yu's feet. She says, "Ruby Yu acts as an autocrat at Zhaodaola, she always changes her mind, everyone must obey her orders. If not, he or she has to face losing their job. Therefore a lot of policies, rules and direction of business development could not last for a long time. At the company we have little say. And we cannot talk directly with Pat Robertson. Ruby is the only bridge. At last, she has no vice general manager to help her. She took charge of marketing and sales. Both were badly arranged."

Ruby does not think she is the only bridge between the capital and the labor, "the account department is managed by the headquarters, and Mr. Robertson can take control of the company." She dislikes the action of reporting straight to her direct superior. "If a clerk comes to my office to criticize his or her direct superior, I would pay no attention." She summarized the lesson; "I have already independently suffered pressure for a long time. I consider that our bad management team blocked further development. In the management team the other three members had little creativity. The idea of e-fashion only came from me. I feel helpless. Besides, I should have opened my eyes to the investors. I am too reliant on the investors to give more money to those employees. Next time I will ratify the situation. But this time I really have no money."

The 14 employees are prepared to win the entanglement, "otherwise, we won't be able to relieve our long-term oppressive feelings," said one.

Center Cuts Cost for Foreign Firms

Beijing Foreign Investment Service Center offers new free service for foreign investors

By Shan Jinliang

Foreign investors in Beijing do not need to pay the usual fees for investment consulting and procedure agencies to establish their companies from January 1, said Beijing Foreign Investment Service Center (BFISC) recently.

In order to attract foreign investment, the move was made in accordance with the governmental principle of establishing a "Green Tunnel" for all the foreign investment projects in the process of examination and approval. The free service list covers fees for investment consulting, helping investors search for projects, receiving and coordinating complaints and providing meeting rooms.

BFISC can offer a one-stop office and deputize all the procedures from examination and approval to registration. "According to the old approach, the examination and approval procedure had to go from the higher level to the

lower, but according to the new way, two different departments can examine the same company at one time," said Chen Gang, deputy director of Beijing Foreign Economic Relations and Trade Commission (BFERTC).

But some special services such as the document-holding fee will not be free of charge, according to a recent municipal document. The document also says 14 kinds of fees by BFERTC have been abolished from 2002, including foreign investor visa prolonging approval fee, with only one still remaining.

With the establishment of the one-stop office for all 18 districts and counties, investors can go directly to the county governments, Beijing Economic Technology Development Area and other Science Parks. They will handle the applications free of charge.

The relevant services can be found in the following

places:

1) Beijing Foreign Investment Service Center, F-3 Building, Fuhua Mansion, No.8 Chaoyangmen North Avenue, Dongcheng District, Beijing, 100027. Consulting Hotline: 65543149, 65543150, Fax: 65543161, E-mail: bfisc@bj.china.com.

2) Beijing Foreign Investment Enterprise Complaint Center, F-4 Building, Fuhua Mansion, No.8 Chaoyangmen North Avenue, Dongcheng District, Beijing, 100027. Consulting Hotline: 65543163, 65543164, Fax: 65543161, E-mail: bfisc@bj.china.com.

3) Beijing Foreign Direct Investment Website (www.fdi Beijing.org.cn), F-3 Building, Fuhua Mansion, No.8 Chaoyangmen North Avenue, Dongcheng District, Beijing, 100027. Consulting Hotline: 65546203, 65546204, E-mail: webmaster@fdibeijing.org.cn.

More Choices for Foreign Insurers, Promises CIRC

By Zhao Hongyi

Foreign insurance companies will be able to deal in property, liability, credit, personal, life, health and accident insurance in China starting from February 1. This marks a concrete step towards liberalizing the insurance market promised at the country's entry to WTO.

China's State Council released the Management Regulations on Foreign Insurance Companies late last month.

The State Council also promised to phase out geographic restrictions of insurance business operations by overseas players in three years, permit wholly foreign owned non-life subsidiaries in two years, and to allow foreign insurers into group, health and pensions insur-

ance business over the next five years.

The Regulations require foreign insurance companies to seek the approval of the China Insurance Regulatory Commission (CIRC) before establishing their business presence in the country.

The Regulations is also applicable to insurance agencies from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.

So far, 26 foreign insurance companies from 12 countries and regions have brought their business to China. Meanwhile, insurance companies from 19 countries and regions have opened 198 representative offices in China, waiting for licenses from the Chinese authority to operate business.

New Year Brings Access to Telecom Market

By Zhao Hongyi

China further opened its basic telecom business aside from the value-added telecom market, allowing foreign investors wider access to the country's telecom market.

China promulgated its new Rules for Overseas Investment in the Telecom Industry at the end of last year.

Foreign investors now can invest in both China's basic telecom business and value-added business, by a shares ceiling of 49% and 50% respectively. Investment can be carried out by means of either establishing joint ventures or purchasing shares from local companies.

China's Ministry of Information Industry (MII) explains basic telecom operators refers to those providing fixed-lines, mobile, satellite, data and international telecom services, while value-added operators refer to those providing Internet access, email, tele-conference and voice mail.

The new rules also stipulate overseas investors should apply to the MII and other related government ministries for operating licenses before starting up.

According to MII statistics, the total revenue of the industry in the first six months of last year amounted to 166.57 billion yuan, and increased by 14.7% over the same period of year 2000. MII expects the figure to climb to 1000 billion yuan in 2005.



Photo by Zhuang Jian

Audiovisual Market Accessible in Days

By Zhao Hongyi

From January 10, foreign investors will have the right and freedom to deal in the whole-sale, retailing and leasing business of audio and video products in China. Theater and cinema management is also covered in the category due for opening.

China's Ministry of Culture (MoC) and Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC) jointly issued the amendment of rules on movies and other audiovisual products at the end of last year.

Detailed defined products include cassette audiotapes, cassette videotapes, records, laser audio discs and laser video discs.

At the very beginning, foreign investors can only participate in the business by means of joint ventures owning a maximum 49% shares. Validity of the joint ventures license is 15

years.

"Introduction of foreign capital will bring much more competition as well as fresh forces to the domestic market," said Zhang Jian'an, vice director of the market division under the Ministry of Culture.

The revised regulation will enable us to learn from foreign companies in the fields of business management and exploration. We have to expand the sales volume of our products, Zhang said.

Joint venture multiplex cinemas, which have emerged for a number of years on an experimental basis in Hangzhou and Shanghai, have proved quite successful.

According to sources from the ministry, the new regulation will be coupled with efforts to consolidate State-owned enterprises to enhance competitiveness, at least on the domestic field.



Mr. Bo Zhengfeng counting the Euro cash he exchanged at bank, showing his happiness in front of the reporters and cameras

Photo by Chen Shuyi

By Zhao Hongyi

"You say I am lucky? Yes, definitely. I did not expect to be the first Chinese to have the newly circulated Euro notes. But I got it. You see here."

Bo Zhengfeng, an engineer from the No. 1 Municipal Construction Company in Beijing, was showing reporters the new Euro notes he just exchanged at the branch of Bank of China on Yabao Road in downtown Beijing.

"I just want to go back home to Harbin and I have to prepare some new money notes for the elders and children as gifts for the coming Spring Festival."

Mr. Bo exchanged out 10,000 new Euro notes.

In the Silk Market famous for garments and fabrics, a saleswoman seemed quite excited when a customer produced some new Euro notes.

"Better if you pay me in Euro," she screamed. "What is the exchange rate? I have to check it out first."

The two stories happened in Beijing at 9:00am January 1, 2002.

With the introduction of

Here Comes EURO!



Euro cash notes around the world on the very first day of the new year, Beijingers-seemed quite excited about the new notes. A lot of them have changed some of their foreign reserves into the new currency.

Experts reiterate, whether you are Chinese or a foreigner living in China, you should change your old Euro-zone currencies into Euros before the deadline on February 28. Meanwhile, your Euro-zone currency account will automatically change into Euros.

Economists believe the introduction of Euro cash notes will open a new space for the further growth of bilateral trade between China and EU.

Last October, the European Commission launched a Euro info-campaign in China when Guo Shuqing, the vice governor of the People's Bank of China, expressed his confidence in the Euro. Guo told visitors to the campaign that China had been snapping up Euros to put in its foreign exchange reserves and would continue to do so in balance with other currencies.

PetroChina to Unveil Result of Its Bidding

Shell and Exxon Mobil hold hopes of a piece of pie

By Zhao Hongyi

Nothing is as mysterious as the gas pipeline construction project bidding opened by PetroChina.

Since opening the bids for the construction of the oil and gas pipeline linking the oil fields in west China's Xinjiang and Shanghai, PetroChina has experienced several up and downs. Even though the deadline is approaching, PetroChina has still declined to give any information on its negotiation with several international consortia, saying only, "we promise to inform you as soon as we get the approval".

PetroChina, part of China's oil and gas production giant China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), opened the bidding at the beginning of last year and promised to unveil the result by the end

of 2001 and start the construction from the beginning of this year.

"Plans are always behind progress," said Mr. Wang Jingbo, spokesman of PetroChina.

"In the third quarter of last year, we, in fact, had reached an agreement with British Petroleum (BP) which means BP won the contract. But at the last minute, the agreement was vetoed by BP's board, disappointing us," Wang said in a phone interview with Beijing Today.

The pipeline has a total length of 4,200 km, with an investment of 48.41 billion yuan (\$5.6 billion). Construction work was planned to be completed in late 2003. Delivery of natural gas to Shanghai start was put in late 2003. Total transfer capacity amounts to 20 billion cubic meters per year,

according to the preliminary initiative prepared by PetroChina. Since BP dropped the agreement, PetroChina chose Shell as the representative of two foreign consortia, respectively led by Shell and Exxon/Mobil, in the negotiation. The Shell-led consortium includes Russian gas giant Gazprom and Hong Kong & China Gas Co, while the Exxon Mobil-led group includes Hong Kong-listed power producer CLP Holdings.

"Another obstacle in the negotiation is China's entry into the WTO, which means we have to change quite a number of the clauses in the contract to international standard practices," Wang said.

Meanwhile, Shell and Exxon Mobil declined to comment on the negotiation.

Zhongguancun to Sell 200 High-tech Projects

By Shan Jinliang

Zhongguancun will release more than 200 industry-leading projects in the 3rd Project Proposing & Technology Trading Exhibition next Thursday and Friday at Beijing New Century Hotel.

The projects, from the park's scientific and research centers, colleges and universities, high-tech companies and returning overseas Chinese students, are mostly in their start up phase.

With finalized management team and business concepts, they have framed a clear finance plan, which enables them to deal in purchasing, merging, and other capital operations.

The initial investment target for adds up to 1.4 billion yuan, while the biggest finance quota for a single project reaches 10 million yuan.

For further information, you can search the website of the Administrative Committee: www.zgc.gov.cn/news/tz069.ht or www.zgc.gov.cn.

Beijing Aims to Become Asian Footwear/Headgear Center

By Zhao Hongyi

Beijing has recently launched the construction of the 'Beijing International Footwear and Headgear Center', set to be the largest in Asia.

Located in the southern part of the city, the center lies between the south second ring road and Beijing South Rail-

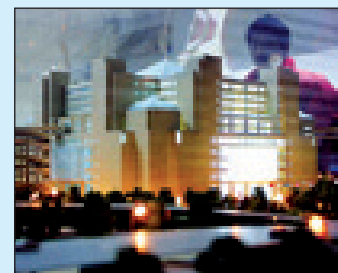


Photo by Gao Ming

way Station, straight down from Tian'anmen Square. It has 14 stories with 12 above and 2 underground. Some levels will be used as car parking. The total area nears 140,000 square meters and total investment amounts to 500 million yuan.

Subtitled as 'Da Kang Footwear and Headgear City', the center will be the largest of its kind in Asia. Construction will be finished by March 2003 but bidding for sales space will start July this year.

Domestic Airline Recruits Foreign Pilots

By Zhao Hongyi

Two pilots, one from Australia and the other from Ireland, joined Hainan Airlines recently, becoming the first foreign pilots ever recruited by a Chinese airline.

The two pilots sat through international standard exams and received one-month's training before they started piloting on flights from Sanya to Seoul and Kuala Lumpur.

Company officials noted that introducing pilots from overseas is aimed at facing the competition between Chinese airlines and their foreign counterparts after China's accession to WTO. More foreign pilots and airline experts would be introduced, they said.

Hainan Airline is based in Haikou, the provincial capital of Hainan Island. It painted its aircraft bodies with colorful pictures showing the tropical scenery and resorts on the island several years ago, and hired some foreign airhostesses last year, both of which have been quite successful in terms of public relations.



Harry gives a passenger's bag the once over

Photo by Jia Ting

Labradors Go on Duty at Airport

By Sun Ming

On the first day of the New Year, four quarantine dogs debuted at Beijing's Capital Airport.

After several months' training, these one-year-old Labrador retrievers can easily determine whether incoming passengers are carrying restricted foodstuffs, without the need to open their baggage.

Labradors have a keen sense of smell and an excellent temperament. When they detect a suspicious article, they simply crouch down and wait for the quarantine personnel to open the indicated baggage.

It seems that the four fellows - Jack, Auk, Black and Harry like their new jobs very much, for they became very excited as soon as they saw luggage appearing on the conveyor belt.

Undoubtedly, they did well

in their first day's work. They sniffed every piece of luggage, one by one. Harry was the first to make a find. After just 10 minutes on the job, he raised his front paws and rush out abruptly. "He must have found something," said his trainer, amazed at his quick reaction.

Harry crouched down beside a blue travelling bag. When the quarantine officers opened the bag, they found seven bags of milk powder, a strictly prohibited import. Not long after, Jack zeroed in on a bag containing lemons.

Each time these special new employees made a find, they received loud praise from their trainers. Unlike circus animals, they do not receive food as a reward. According to their trainers, they not only have special training but also have a fixed diet, eating two regular meals a day.

Animals Set For a Snug Winter

By Su Wei

Beijing Zoo staff were busy during the New Year holiday installing cabins for monkeys. Lu Xiaoli, a local business woman and animal lover, donated the cabins, worth around 10,000 yuan, out of concern for the monkeys well-being during Beijing's cold winter months.

So far this winter, none of the zoo's 5,500 animals have caught a cold. Ye Mingxia, vice-director of public relations, is proud of the staff's efforts in protecting the animals against the cold. "The animal's diets in winter are different from those of summer." Foods containing more calories, such as nuts, are added. Meanwhile, vets and keepers are wary of sudden weather changes. "Keepers and vets usually give the animals medicine when the weather becomes cold or they begin to sneeze or cough."

According to Ye, it is not always easy getting their charges to take medicine. They often have to resort to tricks, such as mixing the medicine with a favorite food. "The gorillas like milk, so

we put the medicine into milk. Elephants like fruits, so we feed them apples together with tablets."

She says that the keepers take care of the animals as they do their own children, so the animals rarely catch cold. "When it's sunny, the animals are encouraged to play in the sunshine. And their enclosures are cleaned and sterilized regularly."

Meanwhile, the central heating is effective in keeping the enclosures warm. Almost all of the closed enclosures, such as those for tigers, lions, pandas, and snub-nosed monkeys, are installed with central heating. "Every year we spend almost 1.5 million yuan on heating and the heating system is kept running from the late September through to May."

As for the reptiles, Ye says the inside temperature is kept between 25°C and 27°C. With their electric heaters, the poisonous snakes such as bamboo snakes and cobras are certain to have a comfortable winter.

Loving Books Too Much

By Sun Ming

Loving books is a good thing for students, but some students love books to the point of stealing them.

According to several big bookstores in Beijing, among the book thieves they have caught, the rate of students is quite high. At Xidan and Wangfujing bookstores, more than 30% of those caught stealing are students.

In Haidian Book Plaza, in an area where there are many universities, the rate has amounted to more than 50%!

"July and August are the worst time for losing books," said Shi Hongwei, an inspector at Changjiejie Police Station. Booksellers get nervous during the holidays, especially during the students' summer vacations.

The number of customers, particularly students, increases greatly during this time. Besides, nearly all bookstores in Beijing have adopted open-shelf planning, which makes things easier for book thieves.

Zhang Yangang, head of security at Xidan Bookstore, says that students who steal books there come from primary schools, middle schools and universities. The

youngest one caught was only eight years old.

A saleswoman at Haidian Book Plaza says that computer books and English novels are popular with undergraduates, while middle school students go for entertainment books and games software.

"Some students are very resourceful when it comes to stealing books" says Zhang Yangang. "They remove the magnetic strip that triggers an alarm if a book is taken from the store without being paid for, or even tear out the pages they need. One undergraduate majoring in physics even made a special metal bag that could demagnetize the metal strip, so he could take unpaid for books out easily."

Most students who have stolen books don't think of themselves as thieves. "They say they do it to further their studies."

According to many bookstores, they seldom take students caught stealing to the police station, because most of them express remorse after being caught. "Considering their future, we just asked them to pay for the books and promise not to do it again," says Zhang.

Love for Leather Preserves Priceless Puppetry

By Su Wei

Veteran leather-silhouette artist and historian Liu Jilin contributed more than 500 leather-silhouette works to the Chinese Art Museum last month. "I am comfortably happy," he said. "I think the collected leather-silhouette works will be kept much better and more people will see them."

The collection includes examples from the Ming and Qing dynasties, drawn from various parts of China such as Liaoning, Beijing, Shanxi and Sichuan, together with Liu's own lifelike works.

Liu says it was his father who inspired her interest in leather silhouettes. Childhood experience is still fresh in the 65-year-old artist's mind.

"At night, my father imitated women's, children's or men's voices behind the screen and used cut paper figures to entertain us."

Liu says he was amazed by the simple plays and re-

ally appreciated her father.

At the age of 18, Liu joined the "De Shun Silhouette Troupe", a group established in the Qing Dynasty.

"It was during that time that I learned to make leather-silhouette knives and first tried to design the leather-silhouette figures."

While working in the troupe, Liu came to believe that some of the traditional shows needed improvement. "Pigsty carrying its wife" was Liu's first show, as well as the first time a silhouette show had been revised.

"I was happy to see that it was demanded to be performed in every act wherever our troupe was. At the beginning, someone said I broke away from the traditional leather-silhouette style and they wanted to maintain the traditional one."

The audience's unprecedented interest, however, enhanced Liu's determination to improve the leather-silhouette show.

Liu later created shows that described the changes in China since Liberation in 1949. He introduced elements learned from film and opera stage lighting and sound to the leather-silhouette show. He even adopted new materials in making the faces and clothes for the leather-silhouette figures.

Liu's biggest regret is that most leather-silhouette treasures were lost or burned during the Cultural Revolution. Recognizing that few people today know what a leather-silhouette show is, he got the idea of studying the history of this art.

He interviewed old leather-silhouette artists and never missed any opportunity to meet people in the trade and collect works in other provinces where the troupe was invited to give performances.

Liu says he is grateful to his family for supporting his efforts. His wife never complains about his spending time and money on collection and study.

"She once even asked help from her family in helping me to buy some rare works," said Liu.

Liu says the museum's acceptance of his collection was not only an honor for him, but also meant that the folk art would not disappear.

"It shows that leather-silhouette art is a treasure that all Chinese people should cherish."



Photos by Huahua

Students: Weeds can replace lawn!

By Sun Ming

High school student Meng Yin and his friends are very excited about being granted permission to use a large open space on their campus to conduct an experiment.

"We persuaded our principal to allow us to plant various kinds of weeds there, instead of grass," said Meng.

From March this year, students at Number Thirteen Middle School have been engaged in an environmental protection experiment in their spare time. They want to test whether weeds can replace lawn. On the basis of several months' experiment, 17-year-old Meng Yin, the initiator of the experiment wrote a 5,000-word paper.

"We found that some weeds can really grow as well as grass if they are trimmed

carefully," said Meng. "People shouldn't have a strong prejudice against weeds." In their experiment, they only chose small weeds that don't grow very high as their subject. These weeds do not need much looking after. "We just watch and trim them every three or four days."

Meng says it's wasteful to plant grass in Beijing, where water shortage is a serious problem. On his way home, he often saw many workers trimming and watered lawn, which needs to be watered every two days. Lawn needs about 1.5 tons of water per ten square meters.

"But weeds don't need so much water," he said. Compared with grass, weeds have longer roots that allow them to extract groundwater.

"Watering lawn frequently can also bring about another problem," added Zhang Ding, a participant in the experiment. The soil under turfs will become more rigid and have fewer nutrients.

In addition, lawn has to be replaced regularly, which is expensive. Lawn can cost 230 yuan per square meter. "Just in the past one year, a lawn area near where I live has been replaced twice," said Meng.

Meng and his friends say they were greatly inspired by their principal who allowed them to conduct their experiment. "Even though we have a heavy study load, we'll try our best. We hope our following experiments will be even more successful."



Meng Yin and Zhang Ding tend to their plot of weeds Photo by Li Shujuan



A model Harry Potter in a Beijing shop

Photo by Qu Liyan

Potter-mania Sets Cash Registers Ringing

By Zeng Peng

Harry Potter toys have gone on sale in major department stores in Beijing, in the lead-up to the release of the movie *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* this February.

Not only toys, but other products including postcards and computer games can be found all over Beijing.

The movie *Harry Potter* and *Philosopher's Stone* is wildly popular now in America and Europe, spurring sales of related merchandise as well as the *Harry Potter* books.

According to Lego, the company that holds the rights for *Harry Potter* in China, the copyright was bought from the movie producer Warner Bros. All the toys, from finger-sized characters to a large-scale, castle are modeled on the movie images.

Despite the high prices, ranging from 75 to almost 1,000 yuan, the toys are in great demand, and some have even sold out. Merchants are looking forward to the release of the movie here, anticipating even bigger sales.

Driven to Destruction

Wuhan car owner smashes Mercedes in consumer dispute

By Chen Ying

A 700,000 yuan imported Mercedes Benz was smashed in front of members of the press and public, December 26, 2001.

Although there have been many examples of disputes between Chinese consumers and foreign companies, it may be the first time such extreme measures have been used to force a resolution.

Wang Sheng, the board chairman of Wuhan Safari Park (WSP), bought the car December 19, 2000 from Beijing Binshi Car Sales.

According to WSP, after being driven for only three months, the car displayed many defects in the power system, computer system and electronics.

On the first occasion, the car was transported to Beijing for repair, but the problems persisted. Binshi sent two repairmen to Wuhan. Up until the beginning of December 2001, the car had been repaired five times, all to no avail.

"We reminded WSP not to use low-grade fuel. We bought the standard gasoline in Wuhan, and showed the difference between that and the one used in the car," said Jiang Hong, manager of Binshi Car Sales.

But WSP has a different answer. "The repairmen didn't solve the car's problems. From the second time, the repairmen mentioned it was a fuel problem. But we always put 93 grade gasoline in the car. We don't use low-grade fuel. There must be a difference between the unused fuel they bought and the used fuel taken from our car," Liu Yueling, the board chairman assistant of WSP insisted.

December 11, 2001, WSP sent a fax to Binshi requesting a full refund. But Hong Kong based Mercedes-Benz China Client Service Department refused, stating that the problems were down to the fuel WSP used.

After the public destruction of the car, the Beijing office of Mercedes-Benz posted an article on website Sina.com. December 27, 2001. The office insisted the reason for the car's trouble lies in using poor quality gasoline. Opinions follow:



WSP workers smashing the problem car

Provided by Chutian Jinbao

Xia Jinying, employee, All-China Consumers Committee (ACCC) of China Quality Control Association

ACCC will investigate and mediate this case. The first step is to let both parties reconcile after the New Year Holidays. We have to discuss which parts of the car should be inspected and how to inspect, and we will authorize an independent inspection.

Many people think WSP's behavior is extreme. I think their methods were improper. Before WSP smashed the car, the committee advised them not to take such extreme measures. They complicated the case and put more obstacles in the way of solving it.

All commodities have quality problems in some ways. The rate of defect may be just one thousandth or even one ten-thousandth for a company's products.

But it means one hundred percent to customers if they get a bad one.

The key is to have good after-sales service. Foreign companies operating in China should give the same customer service as in Europe and the US.

Sometimes a case can reflect a general problem. Awareness of consumer protection has increased recently. The mission of our Society is to update consumer awareness of their rights and bridge the gap between China and foreign companies.

Dong Jingsheng, Vice-President, China Consumers Association

It's worth discussing the media's role. It seems only quarrels and fights are newsworthy while reconciliation is not. The media should pay more attention to the latter. It's more useful and meaningful to analyze how both parties can reconcile.

For instance, Chinese passen-

gers sued All Nippon Airways for the company's impolite service to them. People are also interested in how both parties reconciled at last, if similar situations occur on Chinese airlines, and how the related laws and rules in China are effected.

Many reporters can't wait for the result and don't make a full investigative report. They only care about the confrontation between parties. Papers usually publish a short story giving the conclusion, while ignoring the detail of the investigation. It's shallow.

Liu Xiangwen, President, Beijing University Juris Master Association

Personally, I think there will be little effect to Mercedes if they can deal with this problem quickly and effectively.

Mercedes-Benz is an internationally famous brand which has existed over 100 years. But this case also reminds us there are still many things to do after sell-

ing a product in a modern industrialized society.

This issue is an exception. The consumer, as a law-abiding person should solve the problem through legal methods. The key is how to choose the best way to solve problems. It's important to provide useful methods to solve problems peacefully instead of ordinary people taking the law into their own hands.

Jin Mingzhe, lawyer

WSP can dispose of the car freely, as it belongs to them. WSP must have its own plan for what to do. But I feel what WSP has done will harm Mercedes-Benz's reputation. WSP didn't use its rights in the normal ways and smashed the car in public.

Personally I think WSP's action is extreme and original. Usually it's necessary to protect the proof if there is a cause of dissent. People should really consult a qualified professional if they encounter any legal problems.

SOUND BITES

"What I really hope is that I can get back on track, back to the way I was before and live my life like I used to. It seems very far away. It's like something I can't reach right now. I hope my job gets better. That would help. The markets are very bad and the economy is very bad. Every time you see the news, people are being laid off, companies closing, so my job is not going well. I spend most of my days doing very little."

—Gina Lippis, Stockbroker who was on the 46th floor of the first World Trade Centre tower to be struck by a plane

"I have been a soldier since I was 17 [he is now 26] and I hope this will be the year I can stop fighting. I have big plans for the next few months and God willing they will come true. The Taliban is gone and in Afghanistan there is peace, at the moment. If it lasts, it will be the start of a new life. It means I could hang up my gun and live as a civilian. It will feel strange not wearing a uniform, but I think I'll like it."

—Abdul Malik, Northern Alliance soldier

"I would hope that the international community would take a step back, especially the United States, and consider that it is being given an opportunity. An opportunity to demonstrate that its greatness lies not so much in military or economic strength, but in its commitment to freedom and compassion; its commitment to recognizing that the individual is of infinite worth."

—Desmond Tutu, Former Archbishop of Cape Town, and winner of 1984 Nobel peace prize

"My biggest hope for the new year is to pick up where I left off five years ago. I want to work, to make television programmes, to finish my studies, to earn some money and to travel. And to get rid of my burka."

—Fakhria Sroush, Producer and presenter, Afghanistan state television station

By Chen Ying

By Su Wei

The Education Ministry cancelled the age and marital status limitation on the application for matriculation 2001. People are speculating that this could mean university students are free to marry, if married people can take the Entrance Exam.

What are the universities' attitudes towards students who wish to marry? What about their parents? And what do students themselves think?

Gao Changqin, Professor, Beijing University

If the legally qualified university students are not allowed to marry by their university when they wish to, they have the right to lodge a lawsuit against the university. The students would be certain to win the case.

But at the moment it is not the time to allow University students to get married. The main role for university is to educate young people instead of experiencing the family burden. Meanwhile the

course schedule and the way of teaching and learning are certain to be changed. It will be a complicated reform of the current education system.

Zhao Yun, Professor, Beijing University of Aeronautics & Astronautics

Studying is not easy for many students. They have to deal with all kinds of exams.

University is the most valuable time of your life. During this period, knowledge is to be obtained and the personality is to be matured. Every step weighs heavy on students' future. If they get married, they would probably fail to concentrate on studying. More time would be spent on making money to support their family and their study would be interrupted by household chores.

Marriage, Should Students Have the Right?

The 2nd clause of the current Marriage Law in China stipulates: Everyone has freedom of marriage. The 4th clause states: Men above 22 and women above 20 have the right to register for marriage, if they wish to marry.

The 33rd clause of the current Regulation for Students of Common Higher Education: Any student who marries without authorization during the period of study will be regarded as having quit school. The 35th also says: Any student ordered to quit school is not allowed to resume study.

I suggest university students should not get married so early and they should think about difficulties before they choose this option.

Hua Fang, Senior Student, Beijing Normal University

It is progress in our higher education system to allow university students to get married. We are adults and we enjoy the same rights as any other adult. There is nothing strange for those who do not attend university to get married at the age of 23 or 24. Sometimes parents even complain their grown-up children do not think about marrying. I do not understand why there are so many arguments about university students.

But most of my classmates and I will

definitely not consider marriage. Society is very competitive and the pressure is heavier than ever. Not only does society expect much of us, but also we are aiming high and eager to achieve more. Career advancement is the primary consideration for most of us.

It is a fact that even those who graduated four or five years ago hardly have time to consider marriage. So it is simple that few university students would like to consider marriage.

Sun Shiwei, Sophomore, Beijing Northern Jiaotong University

I have a girlfriend and our relationship is serious. But it does not mean that marriage is approaching. I wish to make my girlfriend happy.

My parents support me at university with their hard-earned salary. It is impossible for me to spend my parents' money on my girl friend. And my girlfriend never allows me to do so. I am proud of spending my own money on my own girlfriend. Meanwhile, I can hardly give up studying at the cost of getting married if I am not willing to be married.

Wei Songqing, Father of a junior university student

University students should not get married. University is different from other social organizations. In China, university is the place for further study and research.

The university will have to face a series of problems such as family housing, residential permission and babysitters to look after the children. What about the marriage and maternity leave for the young couple?

Married students are certain to be influenced by the marriage and their family. They may not benefit from studying as much as single students. There is nothing wrong in giving up one right to enhance the realization of other rights.

I was among the first to go to university after the Cultural Revolution. At that time, some of my classmates were already married and had young children. I was lucky compared with them, for they had to spend time and money taking care of their family. I remembered that one of my classmates said he envied me not having a family and less worry about chores. My son and his classmates are the same as we were at that time and I often tell him to look before leaping.

Cao Guifang Mother of a freshman

The four-year university study is too short and getting married is a waste of time during this period. Students can get married after graduating at a time when their thoughts may be more practical. Love and marriage are not the same thing and university love is less powerful than the social reality.

It is hard to promise that you will only have one lover in your whole life. Reasons for getting married are not as easy as loving each other. Marriage is very practical. Instead it means more obligations. It is naive that some young people think if they love each other they can stay together.

It is inevitable that some young lovers will split up after graduation. Parting at this time is mainly due to residence limitations. If such problems can't be resolved, university students should not be allowed to get married.



Tsinghua graduates at their wedding ceremony on campus

Photo by Lily

By Su Wei

Weekly Survey

Personal Investments Become Popular

Horizon.com has conducted a survey on the personal investments in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan and Chengdu.

Almost 69% of the total surveyed, about 2,120 individuals have already had personal investments.

27% and 36% surveyed favor the foreign and joint banking and insurance services respectively. It may suggest that the competition in the market for the steady increasing individual clients will become extremely heat.

The survey also shows that more than 80% individual investors are the clients of the fix term savings. 86% of people below 25 years currently choose fix term savings in large banks.

It suggests that the fix term saving still play an important role in personal money management for it is taken for granted that the fix term savings is very convenient and less risky.

36% of the surveyed have already invested in the stock market. Over 40% people aged between 26 and 45 say investment in stock market is the best to make money in a short period though they consider the risk is comparatively bigger than any others. The percentage for investing in stock market is now rising among those with higher education background.

About 11% surveyed are investing in debentures/bonds especially for the state treasure bond. Meanwhile the percentage for people above 46 with personal investment in state treasure bond is much higher than other age groups.

Although the investment insurance has only been promoted in the past one or two years, more than 18% of the surveyed invest in this variety. Meanwhile, the survey discloses that more than 20% people aged between 26 and 35 are the main investors in insurance.

However only less than 4% individuals invest in the foreign currency. But high-educated male youth between 26 and 35 prefer investing in the foreign currency. Furthermore, almost 40% individual investors have more than two varieties of investments, suggesting that the financial portfolio has become popular.

The percentage for investment portfolio is especially higher among those with a university education background. So some financial experts say the potential large market for investment portfolio is approaching.

Housing Priced High in Beijing

Sources from State Statistics Bureau have disclosed that the price for commercial housing per square meter in Beijing was 4,771 yuan in the first half of 2001, twice of the national average level.

The price for a suite with 80 square meters living areas was about 380,000 yuan in the first half of 2001. In contrast the annual income per household in Beijing is currently at the average of 34,000 yuan. So the apartment price is eleven times of the annual income.

Meanwhile, the selling areas for the housing in Beijing in the first half of 2001 has increased by 13% compared with the same period of 2000, with the sales turnover increasing by nearly 42%. It means the price of the housing is with an increase of 26%. So it is impossible for most of the ordinary Beijingers to buy the high priced houses with the hard earning salary.

However, the luxury housing with the price about \$2,000 per square meter is still under construction. In fact the demeaned for those luxury ones have been slowed. On the other hand, not enough economic housing have been built.

The economic housing developers usually have difficulty in the requisition by purchasing a proper location due to their profit making concerns and the protection policy for the agriculture field set by the government.

Fortunately, the construction of 2 million square meters' economic housing has been completed by the end of 2001. Meanwhile, 1.5 million square meters' have been started in 2001. About 3 million square meters economic housing are scheduled to be started this year.

Women's Income Increases but Differences Enlarge

Source from All-China Women's Federation has shown that in the past ten years women's income in China has increased sharply but the difference from men's is more obvious.

The annual income for women in cities and towns last year was about 7,409.7 yuan, 70% of men's. The income difference between men and women last year has increased by 7.4% compared with ten years ago.

The annual income for women in the industry of fishing, forestry and agriculture last year was 2,368.7 yuan, only 60% of men's. The difference has also increased by nearly 20% of ten years ago.

Meanwhile, although more women have been involved in the management and the percentage for women technicians is currently even higher than men, the annual income for women in the above two occupations were only 58% and 68% of men's respectively.

More Spiritual Consumption during Holidays

China Economic Monitoring and Analysis Center has conducted a survey about the expenditures on long holidays among 600 households in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

In 2000, the surveyed households spent more than 49% on family reunion during the long holidays such as the Spring Festival, May Day and National Holidays, followed by 48% on shopping and 40% on traditional entertainment such as going to temple fairs and playing mahjong respectively. The expenditure for travels and cultural entertainment such as going to libraries or museums are 35% and 24%. The rest is mainly for fitting exercises.

In 2001, the same families have been surveyed and 46% expenditures during the long holidays went for the family reunion. The expenditures for cultural entertainment and travel were both at 34%, followed by 33% for shopping, 22% for traditional entertainment and 12% for fitting exercises.

The changes in people's expenditure on holidays suggest that the spiritual and healthy consumption has become a fashion and more people are seeking a more colorful way of life.

Salary Increases Decline

By Su Wei

Big pay increases in the emerging economies

Companies in the Philippines awarded the highest percentage pay rises in 2001, with an average overall base salary increase ranging from 11.4% to 10.1% depending on the job category.

Meanwhile the Philippines was the only surveyed country with double-digit salary increase last year. Companies in South Korea and China ranked second and third on the overall average base salary increases.

In contrast, Hong Kong and Singapore saw the smallest salary increases, ranging from 2.9% to 4.1% and 5.4% to 4.6% respectively.

Developed countries and regions such as Hong Kong and Singapore have long been in the forefront of economic development in the Asia-Pacific, so it may be difficult for them to increase even more on an already high base salary.

Meanwhile, developed areas such as Hong Kong and Singapore, due to the limitation of natural resources and the variety in the industries may be more susceptible to an appreciating U.S. dollar.

Taking Hong Kong as an example, the exchange rate for the Hong Kong dollar has continued to rise. Therefore, production costs have also increased, placing the export industry under severe pressure.

Mick Bennett, the Asia Pacific Managing Director of Hewitt Associates, said "Although Hong Kong is in the unenviable position of last place in the pay rise scales, it was nevertheless the only study location in 2001 in which the average salary increases were higher than 2000."

It suggests Hong Kong is still favored by some investors, especially those from China's mainland. Domestic companies have more opportunity to be listed in the Hong Kong stock market in order to get more financing. So with the inflow of funds from China's mainland, the economy in Hong Kong might improve further.

Countries with developing economies usually have a comparatively low salary base, so salary increases are much more obvious than in the developed countries.

Meanwhile the developing countries have realized the importance of establishing their own economic system and becoming less reliant on foreign economies.

Thailand and the Philippines have learned from the Asia Economic crisis, and are making great efforts to improve their almost shattered economies. They have made progress in the flexible control of their currency and tend to depend less on market self regulation.

The reconstruction of their debts has also benefited them in releasing the financial pressure and developing their economy, helping them to get rid of the shadow of the Asian Economic Crisis.

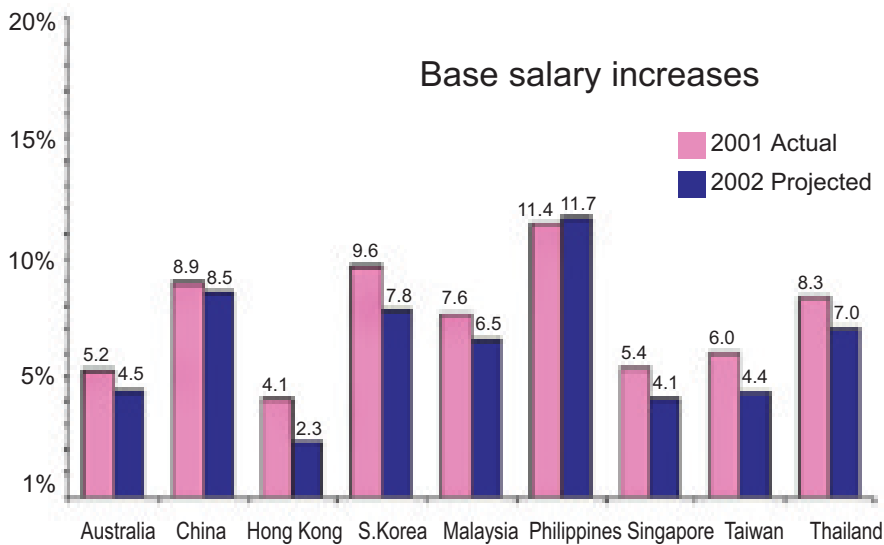
The reasons for the comparatively big salary increases in China include the worldwide confidence in China's economy and the continuing growth of foreign investment. Production costs in China are much lower due to the comparatively large amount of resources and labors. Therefore foreign companies have long been attracted to invest in China.

Meanwhile, the GDP in China as an important referencing factor for salary increases has kept increasing at not less than 7% in the past few years. Especially this year, the APEC meeting and the entry to WTO has enhanced the promise of fast economic development. Consequently the confidence of foreign investors has been strengthened.

Projected salary increases for 2002 fall short of expectations

For 2002, companies in the Philippines are projected to have the highest percentage salary increase, between 10.8% and 11.7%. China and South Korea are also expected to see comparatively high salary increases. However, the increase in Hong Kong is projected to be the smallest, in the range of 2.3% to 1.5%.

Though being independent has been empha-



sized in the economic development, cooperation has also been highlighted. So the worldwide economic downturn is responsible for the slowing in salary increases as a whole.

The increase in salaries depends not only on the state of the organization, but also on the overall industry at home and abroad. When the recession is spread all over the world, cost reduction and risk management become the first concern.

Meanwhile neighboring areas can have a strong influence on a region's economy. Still taking Hong Kong and Singapore as an example, the high cost of the Hong Kong products has resulted in the reduced exports to Singapore and other places. The reduced number of tourists has also affected the economic recovery in Hong Kong.

On the other hand, Hong Kong investors are not as capable as before of investing overseas, even in neighboring countries such as Singapore. Although Singapore has provided attractive conditions for investment, the number of investors from the region has been decreasing. Consequently, tourism in Singapore has also seen falling consumption.

However more attention has been given to developing areas, which have a steady increase rate. China is among those favored ideal investment choices. The entry to WTO means more foreign funds will be obtained. Direct investment is one of the best ways to develop the economy and promises a large return for investors. It is said those foreign investments are the new blood to spur the economic development.

skilled the employee, the more frequently his or her salary is increased. Some of the representatives from the surveyed companies say they have already instigated pay freezes, but have also been making plans to provide limited salary increases across the region.

Under the severe economic condition, employers are trying to reduce labor costs and maintain their profits as much as possible. However, most employees also understand their role in the production and they will not easily give up their rights in obtaining more salary, despite the possibility of being laid off.

However, the sensitive issue has been not as obvious as before. Employers are less inclined to increase salaries, but they could probably still take more advantage of the employees.

Employers are trying all kinds of ways, such as encouraging the employees to purchase the company shares or providing the paid holiday or some further study with the reimbursing the employees. In this way the pay freezes are a little easier to swallow, and employees are less likely complain.

Some foreign companies in China have also purchased insurance for their employees in order to make the reduced increase in salaries more palatable. Salary increases in foreign companies in China were as high as 31% six years ago.

However at that time, the number of employees in foreign companies was much lower than today, therefore the cost in increasing pay may have been less overall.

9.11 Attacks affects salary increase policies

Among 45% of the surveyed companies, some 150 companies, say they are planning or have implemented changes to their 2002 salary budgets in a follow-up survey.

The projected salary increase of 2002 has decreased at an average by 1.4% ranging from 3.2% to 0.8%.

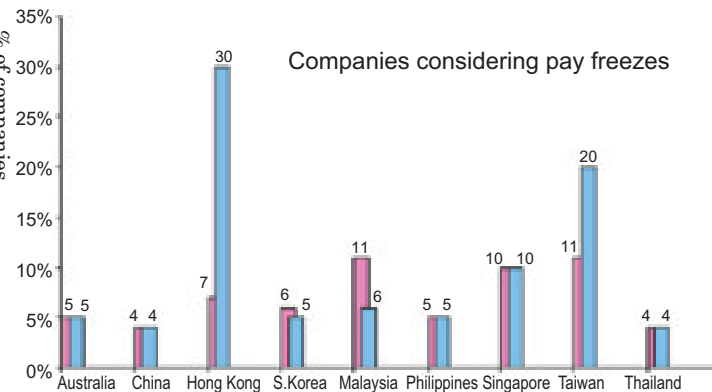
Almost 63% of those companies attribute the change to a combination of the September

11 terrorism attacks and the economic recession prevailing globally and locally. 36% of those companies say the reason for changing the salary policy is solely due to the economic conditions.

Of the remaining companies though, only two admit that the September 11 events are solely responsible for changing salary increase policies.

It suggest under the process of globalization, no country is immune to world events, for even the Philippines, the most optimistic country according to the survey, and China, the most favorable investment destination, also adjusted salary increase to 8.5% and 5.6%.

Since September 11, China has reduced exports and imports, both important to the national economic index. The consequent strengthening of customs controls has also had the effect of deterring some foreign investment. It also demonstrates that a stable political situation is the basis for continual economic development, and that the world political condition is truly a global issue.



Pay freezes become universal

Employees in Malaysia were hit hardest by pay freezes in 2001, with 11% of the surveyed having implemented pay freezes. The outlook for 2002 is particularly gloomy for employees in Hong Kong and Taiwan, where pay freezes are projected by 30% and 20% of respondents respectively.

Even Malaysia, the only country indicating a drop in the level of pay freezes in 2002, reported 6% of companies implementing freezes.

Widespread pay freezes are the result of last year's economic downturn and an unfavorable outlook for 2002.

Last year the United States and Japan also experienced downward spiraling economies, which has not only scared investors in the developed countries, but also resulted in wildly fluctuating currency rates in different countries.

Employers are well aware that increasing pay is the biggest cost for companies. The more

A Window on History

Foreign gifts from heads of state open to public

Go to Millennium Square!
A month-long exhibition is currently underway, featuring a total of 210 gifts given by visiting heads of state since 1949.

China International Friendship Museum (CIFM) is staging the exhibition, titled "Our Friends Everywhere - A Selection of Foreign Gifts to New China" in commemoration of its 20th anniversary.

CIFM is designed to collect, preserve and research gifts from other countries. In the past 20 years, the museum has collected some 20,000 gifts from 160 countries and regions worldwide. These gifts are of great political, historical and artistic value, and provide a vivid record of sino-foreign exchanges.

The exhibition serves as a window, from which one can view different cultures, ethics, folklores and gift-giving customs. Meanwhile, you can get a glimpse of the demeanor of three generations of Chinese state leaders: Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin.

When the exhibition concludes in Beijing, it will tour to Hong Kong, where it will open in March, says Zhang Ying, director of CIFM's Display Department.

Following the completion of the remodeling of the National Museum of Chinese History in 2003, about 300 pieces from the CIFM collection is expected to go on permanent display there, Zhang Ying said.

With the support of the Nanjing Museum, CIFM launched its official website on Dec. 25, 2001. Click on www.friendshipmuseum.com to view more than 400 gifts.

Gifts mark historic events



Presented to Mao Zedong by U.S. President Richard Nixon in 1972

By Ivy Zhang

The Bird of Peace

A life-size pair of porcelain swans, called "The Birds of Peace," is a testament to former U.S. President Richard Nixon's historic meeting with Chairman Mao Zedong in Beijing in 1972. This piece is the number one attraction at the China International Friendship Museum. It is not only a spectacular artistic work, but also a symbol of the normalization of Sino-US diplomatic relations.

In the early 1970's, with tension growing between the two super powers - the U.S. and the USSR - the US government was forced to change its policy towards China. Meanwhile China had decided to develop Sino-US relations.

One of the first public hints of the thaw came on April



Presented to Deng Xiaoping by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in 1982 (up) and 1984 (down)



Photos by Qu Liyan

6, 1971, when the American table tennis team, in Japan for the 31st World Table Tennis Championship, received a surprise invitation from their Chinese colleagues for an all-expense paid visit to the People's Republic. Time magazine called it "The ping heard round the world."

On April 10, nine players, four officials, and two spouses stepped across a bridge from Hong Kong to China's mainland, ushering in the era of "Ping-Pong diplomacy." They were the first group of Americans officially allowed into China since the founding of People's Republic in 1949.

Premier Zhou Enlai worked the public relations opportunity beautifully, receiving the Americans at a banquet in the Great Hall of the People on April 14. "You have opened a new chapter in the relations of the American and Chinese people," he told the unlikely diplomats. That same day, the U.S. announced plans to remove a 20-year embargo on trade with China.

On February 21, 1972, Richard Nixon became the first U.S. President ever to visit China. He arrived in Beijing on the morning of that day, and that afternoon, met with Chairman Mao in his study at Zhongnanhai. The Bird of Peace was presented to Mao during this meeting. On February 28, the "Joint U.S. - China Communiqué" was signed in Shanghai, marshalling in a new era.

The Bird of Peace was made by American sculptor Edward Marshall Boehm (1913-1969) who is best known for a large series of colored figures of American birds, issued in limited editions, and now much sought after by collectors.

The Iron Lady's silverware

In September 1982 and again in December 1984, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher met with Deng Xiaoping, then Chairman of Central Advisory Commission of the CPC, presenting a silver cigarette case and a silver plate to the Chinese leader to mark the historic events surrounding her visit.

Britain launched the first Opium War against China in 1840, and in 1842 forced the Qing government to sign the Treaty of Nanjing, under which Hong Kong Island was ceded to Britain. In 1856 Anglo-French forces launched the second Opium War, and in 1860 Britain forced the Qing government to sign the Convention of Beijing, under which the tip of the Kowloon Peninsula was ceded to Britain. In 1898 Britain once again forced the Qing government to sign a treaty, the Convention for the Extension of Hong Kong. Under this convention Britain was granted a 99-year lease on a large stretch of land on the Kowloon Peninsula and more than 200 surrounding islands (referred to as the "New Territories").

The Chinese people had always been opposed to the three unequal treaties. In the early 1980's, Deng Xiaoping proposed that both the Hong Kong and Taiwan questions be resolved in accordance with the concept of "one country, two systems". Meanwhile, with 1997, the year the lease on the New Territories would expire drawing nearer, Britain was exploring China's position on the Hong Kong question. Under these circumstances, the conditions for settling the issue was ripe.

The talks held by the Chinese and British governments for this purpose were divided into two stages. In the first stage, between Thatcher's 1982 visit to China, and June 1983, the talks centered on overall principles and procedures. In the second stage, between July 1983 and September 1984, delegations of the two governments held talks on specific substantive issues.

On December 19, 1984, the heads of the Chinese and British governments officially signed the "Sino-British Joint Declaration" in Beijing, under which the Chinese government would resume the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong with effect from 1 July 1997.

A Cornucopia of treasures



Japan's gift to Li Ruihuan in 1988

Japanese doll

In Japanese, these delicate dolls are called Ningyo. In 1988, Li Ruihuan, then the member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, met with a visiting Japanese business delegation and accepted the doll as a gift.

Fujimusume (Wistaria lass) is a representative work of ancient Japanese dance. It depicts a young girl who has lost her love. In the dance, the girl in traditional Japanese dress expresses her sorrow in the waving of her flowery bamboo hat and swaying of her body.

The doll is a reflection of the girl in the dance, with lowered eyes and an air of disappointment. The hanging of wistaria branches reflect the floral patterns of her dress and hat.



American gift to Deng Xiaoping in 1979

Ups and Downs

The US government presented an abstract painting to Deng Xiaoping, then Vice-Premier of the State Council, in 1979. The staff of the museum dubbed the untitled painting Ups and Downs.

The artist uses a large, flowing white image on a black background, symbolizing the recipient's turbulent political life.

The white center is outlined with green, which can be interpreted as an ode to the power of life. The red border represents unyielding faith and belief.

With strong and vivid color, the painting creates a strong and deep impression and symbolizes the American people's respect for Deng.



Yugoslavia's gift to Chinese government in 1977

Yugoslavia heroes

In August, 1977, this bronze sculpture was presented to the Chinese government by Josip Broz Tito, President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It is called the "Transfer of the Wounded Soldiers".

The sculpture depicts guerillas carrying wounded soldiers during Yugoslavia's struggle against the invading German army.

In early 1943, German troops besieged Yugoslavia's anti-fascist armed forces. The Yugoslav guerillas won the battle, successfully transferring its forces along with 4,000 wounded soldiers.

Tito said it was a campaign of rescuing the wounded and the most humane campaign in military history.



Ghana's gift to Liu Shaoqi in 1961

Ghana's golden stool

This wood-carved stool was given to Liu Shaoqi, then President of the People's Republic of China, by Kwame Nkrumah, President of the Republic of Ghana in August 1961.

The gift is a copy of gold-encrusted stool, the symbol of the kingship, kept in Ghana's Ashante Palace.

In Ghana, there is a legend about this stool. One stormy and thundering day, long, long ago, a golden stool suddenly fell from the sky and landed on the knees of King Osei Tutu, bestowing on him superior powers.

Today, the original golden stool is kept in the palace of Kumasi, the second largest city of Ghana and the capital of the former Ashante Kingdom. It is displayed to the public only once every 20 years.



Dancing to Perpetual Youth

By Zhu Lin

Teng Aimin was known to his friends as Lao Teng, (Old Teng) even when he was just 20 years old. "Maybe because I look older than my age, or because I always act as an experienced dancer," explained Teng. At first sight, he can be recognized as a dancer by his chiseled features and expressively muscular body. Now aged 38, he is the oldest dancer in Beijing Modern Dance Company. But he has within him the liveliest passion for dancing, "I'll dance until the day I can't move."

For people who meet him for the first time, his most distinctive feature is his long ponytail down to the waist. "The reason I have my hair long has a close relationship with modern dance," said Lao Teng. With a cigarette in hand, he started to tell his story.

Predestined to Dance

Lao Teng joined the army dance troupe in Jinan, Shandong Province in 1977 at 12 years old. He had no idea about dance at that time. In his first dancing examination, he was asked to stand upside down. He failed totally and went back to his dorm in tears. That night he practiced alone for hours in darkness since the light in the army was cut off after nine thirty everyday. He was black and blue all over. In the second examination, his excellent performance amazed everybody. With an inborn lust for a challenge, he entered the world of dancing.

Lao Teng believed he had a predestined lot with dance. In 1984 after five years in the army, he took a main role in the dance drama *Garland at the Foot of Mountains*, but served as Dancer C. However, things always change at the last moment. Two days before the performance, Dancer B suddenly was unable to dance. So Teng became Dancer B.

At the premiere of the drama, when the last note of the overture ended and the curtain was raised, Dancer A suddenly fell down from the six-meter high stage. "Lao Teng, quick! It's your turn!" The choreographer shouted at him when the staff all rushed to rescue Dancer A.

Everything happened so fast in a few seconds. "I didn't even understand what had happened and then music for Act One started!" Lao Teng's mind went blank. He, as well as others, was not sure whether or not he could memorize all the movements. But the audience was waiting. He came up to the stage with a palpitating heart. After the drama finished, the conductor met Lao Teng backstage and was surprised to see his costume. "Was it you who performed just now?" he asked, "I was closest to you and didn't notice the dancer was different! You did such a good job, boy!"

Taking off the Uniform

Lao Teng became the most important dancer in the whole army. More and more awards were bestowed on him and he started to teach as well. In 1990, his colleagues thought about holding a solo performance for him but he refused. "I was the main dancer almost in every program of the army troupe," he laughed, "What's the point of me having a solo? It would be nothing but repetition of the old programs."

Dancing programs in the army were rather narrow. The dancers didn't have to give their own voice since the idea was decided and movements were fixed. He was already unsatisfied with his life. Facing the young soldiers learning from him, he felt lost, "Where is my goal? Can I just stay here forever?" At nearly 30 years old, he wanted to change and learn more.

In 1993, Teng came to Beijing during a travel performance. Jin Xing, the most influential modern dancer and choreographer in China called him. Jin was pre-



Cool on the stage

paring to hold a modern dance class and invited him to join. He joined the class for some time and quickly fell in love with modern dance. This prompted his decision to leave the army.

But it was not easy. "You must be mad! It there something wrong with you?" his colleagues said to him. At that time, he was going to be promoted, and had been assigned an apartment, which were the best things a soldier could expect to have. His parents also asked him to reconsider, "You're already 30 years old and must take responsibility of what you're going to do. You're only 30 once." But Lao Teng was determined, "Just because I can only be 30 once, I want to grab some time to learn more." Lao Teng paused, gazing at the smoke of the cigarette for a second. He asked permission from the army authorities to leave four times. It was not until 1996 that he was allowed to leave.

In the army, every soldier must keep his hair short. "I decided to wear my hair long and show my strong will to leave the army. I won't look back." The whole new world of modern dance opened its door before him, but there was still a long way to go.

Dance for Myself

Jin Xing established Beijing's first modern dance company, Beijing Modern Dance Company in 1995. In December 1993, Jin Xing staged his composition *Half Dream* in Beijing for the first time. It was a real hit in cultural circles. The art of modern dance in Beijing began to develop. Lao Teng is the only dancer to stay with the company from its beginning till today.

Lao Teng had sound dancing technique and a strong body needed for a dancer. But staying in the army for 16 years, he had been accustomed to the form of military dancing. He suddenly found he did not know how to move at all. He realized it was harder for a dancer to be still than to move. A dancer knew what to do in movement, but he might not know what to do when the music stopped. "You can move your body to other people's ideas, but you can't keep still for others," he said, and waved his arms to demonstrate what he meant. "It took him two years to get used to modern dance. Once his inner fire burned more ferociously, his radiance could no longer be constrained.

"From now on I dance for myself," he told himself. On recalling this emotion, there was a subtle combination of a strong man's determination and hidden sensitivity on his face.

Love in Hardship

It is said that good luck occurs in hardship. This is certainly true for Lao Teng. In 1998, Jin Xing left Beijing Modern Dance Company. The company faced the threat of closing down. As the oldest dancer, Lao Teng felt a strong sense of responsibility to

lead the company to overcome any hard times. "I used to be everything," he remembered, "The project manager, the accountant, the public relations manager, the cook— everything!"

Then Gong Weiping came on the scene. She's a dancer in Chinese traditional dancing, ten years younger than Lao Teng. Her first impression of Lao Teng was not good because of his long hair. "I was a traditional kind of girl. At that time, I thought a man with long hair must be indecent," she said. Standing with muscular Lao Teng, Gong looks very dainty. But Lao Teng liked her at once. He knew her prejudice about him but didn't give up. When Gong was sick in bed, he went to see her everyday, which touched the girl. She gradually got to know him, together with the hard situation of his company.

The worst thing was the financial situation. All the dancers didn't receive any salary for three months. Gong sent lunch for Lao Teng every noon at first, and then started to cook for all the dancers everyday. She also gave them financial support from her own pocket. When she didn't have much to do for her own dancing, she stayed in Lao Teng's company, offering them help as much as possible. "Maybe I fell in love with him, so I helped the company so generously," smiled her. Lao Teng promised himself, "I must cherish this girl in the future." They got married.

In 1999, Lao Teng participated in the International Festival of Modern Choreography held in Vitebsk, Belarus (IFMD99). Together with Gao Yanjin, another experienced dancer in the company, Teng won the first prize. It was the first time for Chinese dancers to win this award. "One half of the golden medal belongs to me. Another half belongs to my wife," Lao Teng assured.

A Happy Family

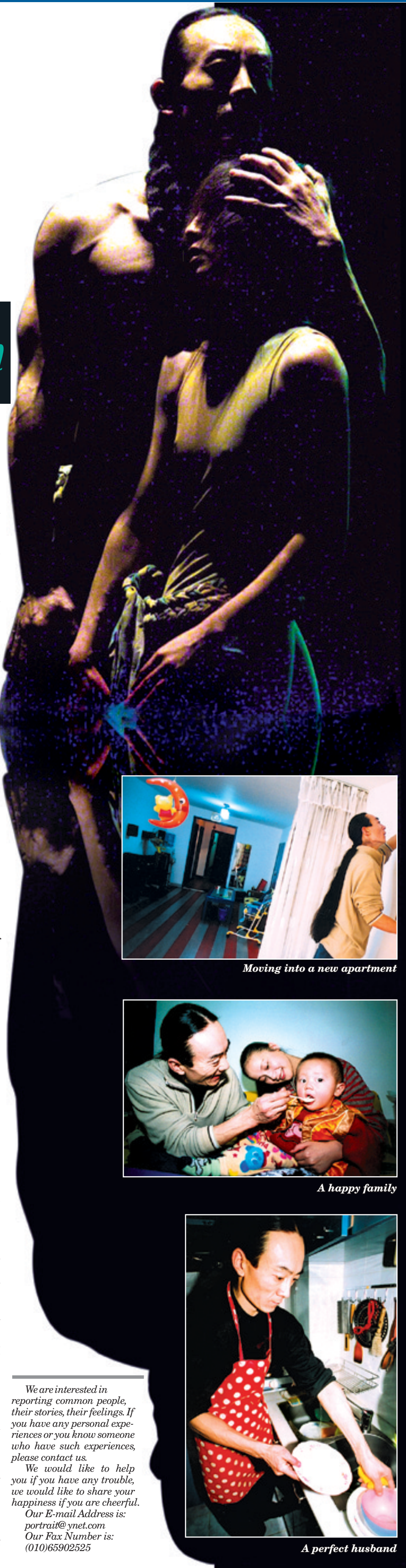
Lao Teng doesn't have an arrogant manner like some modern artists. Neither does he look avant-garde. When so many artists and musicians reject marriage, he holds a traditional concept to family and love, "I want both family and dance. I hate to use my career as an excuse for neglecting my family." He named his little son Teng Long Feiyang, meaning a dragon dancing and flying to the sky.

When he was six months old, little Feiyang got seriously sick and had to undergo an operation. Looking at the little boy suffering, Lao Teng would rather have taken the operation for him if it could cure his son's illness. The baby was not old enough to say he was sick in words. He didn't laugh for two weeks. One day, Lao Teng saw him laughing for the first time after the operation. He burst into tears, "My baby can laugh now!"

Little Feiyang has already shown his interest in dance although he's only one year old. Hearing music, he will wave his arms and kick his legs for joy. When his father is dancing on the stage, he tries hard to get out of his mother's arms. It seems he can't wait to crawl onto the stage. Gong doesn't control him too much. She just puts her arms around the baby's waist to protect him, and crawls with him. "He's my son!" said Lao Teng proudly, smiling at Gong.

Eight years ago, Lao Teng came to Beijing alone with nothing but a suitcase and enthusiasm for modern dance. "Now I've got my career, my wife, my son and my apartment!" He spread out his hands in satisfaction. As a 38-year-old dancer, Lao Teng doesn't worry much about his age. He knows he's not as skillful as the young dancers, but he has a lot they don't experience. "I want to be the oldest dancer in China."

Photos by Cui Jun and Zhang Zhang



Moving into a new apartment



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A perfect husband

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A drum beating performance at the Drum Tower ceremony

Photo provided by Beijing Sunny Design Studio

Ancient ‘Clock’ Gets New Hour Hands

By Zhao Pu

The Drum Tower in Beijing has begun beating out time again, symbolizing the re-birth of the ancient way of time keeping.

Zhu Yingli, director of the Beijing Drum and Bell Towers Maintaining Agency reveals, “We look forward to building a traditional drum culture center in this area, with the drum tower as the central point.” 25 newly made drums were also exhibited and performed on December 31, 2001.

Mankind has used the sun, water, candles, sand, pendulums, springs and hour hands in time keeping. While in China, Bell Towers and Drum Towers were used together as time-signalers for centuries in big cities before mechanical clocks were introduced. Fortunately we still have the two ancient time-telling towers in Beijing, to reminisce over the old days of ‘morning bell and evening drum’ (晨钟暮鼓).

Age-old ‘Clock Towers’

At the north end of the central-axis line of Beijing, two magnificent pavilions of upturned eaves tower up to the heavens—the Drum tower and the Bell tower, aligned one in front of the other and colored red and gray, respectively.

They are known as architectural models of cities’ bell and drum towers of ancient times and cited as the ‘Clocks’ of the ancient city of Beijing.

Called ‘Qizheng Tower’, the Drum Tower was initially built in 1272 in the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368). Located 100m away to the north of the Drum Tower, the Bell Tower was built in the same year. Both towers have been destroyed by fires and then rebuilt several times over the years.

In the 14th year of the Republic of China (1925), the Drum Tower was renamed as ‘Mingchi Tower’ and was converted into a ‘Beijing Popular Education Center’: the Bell Tower turned into a cinema under the Education Center. Thus, the 600-year time-keeping function of the Bell and Drum Towers was changed fundamentally.

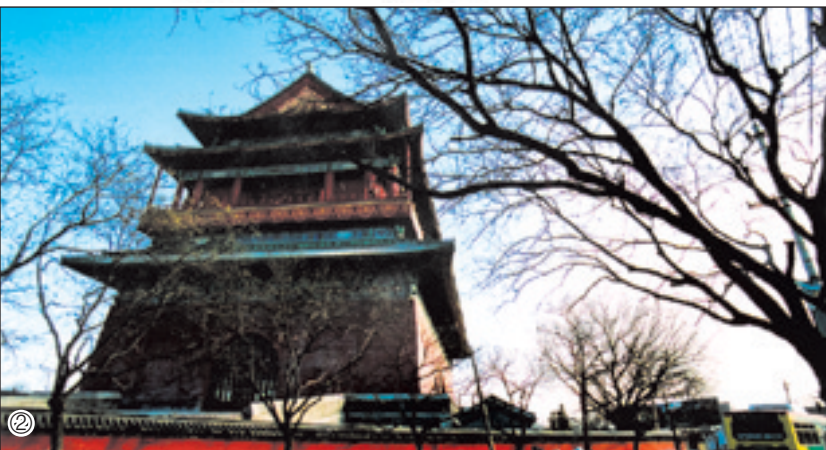
After 1949, special funds were allocated to restore the towers on a large scale. An automatic fire-extinguishing system was adopted to protect the wooden structure against fire.

The towers were opened to the public in the 1980s as a place of historical interest and tourist attraction, also as part of the famous Hutong tour.



① The remaining big drum, which dates back to the late Qing Dynasty, is dilapidated and only used for exhibition
② The Drum Tower stands at the north end of the central axis line of Beijing

Photo by Zhuang Jian



Since 1990, the age-old bell in the Bell Tower regenerated its clock function by ringing on New Year’s Eve as part of the celebrations.

Morning Bell and Evening Drum

With one bell and twenty-five drums in place, the Bell Tower and Drum Tower used to function as the time-signaling center of Beijing, the capital of the Yuan, Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) Dynasties.

As the names imply, the Bell Tower contained a bell while the Drum Tower contained drums. ‘Morning bell and evening drum’ was the rule of striking. In the past, drums and bell were used to tell the times for the civil and military officials to go to court and for the common people to live,

rest and work.

Specifically in the past, when there was a city wall surrounding the city of Beijing, bell and drums in the ‘clock’ towers were rung and beaten every two hours at night from 7pm to 5am. At 7pm, the drums were beaten to mark the time of ‘Jing Jie’ (净街), which means to close the city wall gates and to shut the transportation. And thus the city relaxes and rests after a whole day’s bustle and clamor. The city gates were all closed responding to the drums to ensure the city’s security at night.

After that, the bell was rung every two hours during the night. And the final ring of the bell at 5am at dawn functioned as a ‘morning call’ for the ancient city and its generations of citizens.

The city gates were opened at that moment to restart a new day’s communication with the outside.

This way of timekeeping ran for over 600 years and was terminated in 1924, when the last Emperor Puyi was thrown out of the Forbidden City. The bell remained there, intact, while only one of the twenty-five drums was retained.

Drum Tower Gets New Soul

There used to be 25 drums in the drum tower, a big drum in the center surrounded by 24 little ones. The 24 surrounding drums, which symbolize the 24 solar terms in China’s lunar calendar, are all gone. The remaining big drum, which dates back to the late Qing Dynasty, is dilapidated and only used for exhibition.

In order to put into full play the relics of the Bell and drum Towers and bring to the public their historical traces, the Beijing Drum and Bell Towers Maintaining Agency have made a replica of the twenty-five original drums and put them on display on the second floor of the Drum Tower.

“They are not only for display, every local or tourist visiting the tower may have a chance to beat the drums and to watch the splendid drum performance,” says Zhu.

A grand ceremony was held on the last day of last year in introducing the new ‘hour hands’ of the ancient drum tower to the public. 50 college students from Beijing University volunteered to beat the drums at the ceremony. A performance of drum beating led by Zhu Xiaolin, famous percussionist, captured the audience at the ceremony. The performers all dressed in Qing Dynasty officials’ costumes to reconstruct the drum beating of ancient times.

“The drum is an important part of traditional Chinese culture. Our ancestors used drums to express feelings, celebrate victories, perform in sacrificial ceremonies and to entertain...the Bell and Drum Towers are also a symbol for the old city of Beijing. We wish to establish a drum culture center here to promote the traditional culture and to provide people with a better way to read history,” remarks Zhu.

Zhu also says that they plan to make a replica of the big bell in the Bell Tower in the future to provide bell-ringing experiences to the visitors.

Revolutionary Museums Treasure ‘Mao Zedong’ Train

By Zhao Pu

5,500 cast models of the steam locomotive (1946) named after Mao Zedong were presented to revolutionary museums all over China, in commemorating the 55th anniversary of the hero train’s birth.

The ‘Mao Zedong’ steam locomotive has a deep historical background as a witness to the last 50 years of history of the country.

The specially named locomotive was born on October 30 1946 in Harbin, capital city of Northeast China’s Heilongjiang Province. The train was originally produced by Japanese invaders in Dalian in 1941 during the Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945). 80% of the train was destroyed by its Chinese attendants fighting against the invasion.

In October 1946, the train was rebuilt for the Liberation War (1946-1949) and was renamed ‘Mao Zedong’ train to express the workers’ full support and enthusiasm for the Communist Party and its leader.

In 1950, it worked as a freighter in the Korean War; it survived the Great Leap Forward in 1958 as an old train, which was supposed to retire; it also experienced the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).

The train has been transferred three times, and set a record of 728 kilometers’ safe driving.

On the 55th anniversary of the birth of the hero train, the Ministry of Railways made 5,500 cast models of the 1946 steam locomotive.



The cast model of the ‘Mao Zedong’ Train

Photo by Zhuang Jian

Following Ancestors’ Steps To Wangfujing

By Shi Xinyu

Wangfujing, the modern shopping center in the heartland of Beijing city, was possibly once a hunting area for primitive Beijingers 25 million years ago.

The proof can be found in the newly opened Wangfujing Paleolithic Museum on the third floor basement in the Oriental Plaza.

In the year 1996, a site of ancient people’s remains was discovered by chance at the building site of today’s Oriental Plaza. According to an experiment on the discovered relics carried out by an archaeologist from Peking University, this site belongs to the late Paleolithic age, around 25 million years ago. This area might have been a hunting or transitory dwelling for those ancient people.

Five years later, after investment from Li Jiacheng and Dongcheng District Government, a 400 square-meter-large museum was built on the site of the discovery of the remains. More than 2,000 items are displayed, including fire-use remains, burnt animal-bone remains, fine stone implements, bone implements, some mammal-bone and tree fossils.

At the center of the exhibition hall is a 50-square-meter plot preserved as it looked when first dug out: all the primitive people’s living vestiges, such as fire ashes, burnt animal bones and stone implements remained at the same place that they had stayed for millions of years. Around the plot, other exhibits are placed in glass cases with explanations and pictures on the wall.

Besides those excavated relics, other ways of giving visitors a sense of such a faraway age give the museum a fresh, vivid look: sculptures of ancient people’s daily lives standing by the central plot, a touching screen and an interactive teaching machine providing background knowledge, and even a jigsaw puzzle waiting in the corner.

“This museum is different”, commented Sang Yufang, a passerby who came in for curiosity, “it stays close to ordinary people. I will bring my grandson here tomorrow to let him learn something about our history.”



Visitors take interest in the exhibits

Photo by Cui Jun

Big Shot's Funeral

Blows a Happy New Year

By Shi Xinyu

The year 2002 has arrived with the heat waves stirred up by a New Year's movie - *Big Shot's Funeral*.

From December 21, 2001, the first day the movie was on show, thousands of people avalanched into cinemas and hysterical laughter filled every projection hall. Actually the most frequently heard greeting between friends since the end of last year has been, "Have you watched *Big Shot's Funeral*?"

In the first five days, more than 3.8 million yuan migrated from Beijing citizens' wallets to cinemas' ticket offices. Feng Xiaogang, the director of *Big Shot's Funeral*, declared with pride that December could be taken as his own movie festival!

While every first-run cinema is managing to prolong the screening period of the New Year's movie by a week, 15,000 sets of the "Paper Version" of *Big Shot's Funeral* published by Modern Press were also released in January. Each package, costing 24 yuan, includes a book with the same name of the movie adapted from the screenplay as well as a VCD of movie segments and shooting features.

Witty and sharp dialog is the soul of the movie as well as a backbone of the book. Among the three screenwriters, Li Xiaoming and Feng Xiaogang are big shots in the field of screenwriting while Shi Kang is a successful professional writer of today. "Many sayings in the screenplay would be quoted frequently as classical words in people's daily lives," Chen Hong, the editor of the book, said with strong confidence.

Also the plot of *Big Shot's Funeral* is slightly fantastic. Tyler, the big shot - an old and famous Hollywood director, and Lucy, Tyler's assistant - an America-born Chinese girl brought up by Tyler, employed Yoyo, a cameraman, to shoot a documentary movie of Tyler's life in Beijing as a director of *The Last Emperor*. The two men soon became friends. But that big shot met with a great crisis this time: no inspiration came to mind, and he staunchly refused to copy the work of others. After being replaced by the unsatisfied investors, Tyler was struck by a sudden illness. At the edge of falling into a coma, he asked Yoyo to give him a comedy funeral.

When a finely schemed funeral plan was being worked out by Yoyo and his friend, they found they had to raise money for the funeral by themselves. Then things began to go crazy: Yoyo auctioned advertisements on the funeral publicly and drummed up aggressive biddings. Finally when every possible advertising space was sold out, everything was ready for the funeral and everyone was waiting for the expected death, Lucy told Yoyo that Tyler had recovered!

Of course a New Year's movie has a happy ending: Tyler found inspiration from the comedy funeral Yoyo organized and shot the story into a movie. Also Lucy and Yoyo fell in love.

Some comments on BBS of www.sina.com said: "Hey, does anyone have a full copy of the screenplay of *Big Shot's Funeral*? I want it. Please send me an email if you have any information." Well, it seems the day the paper version of *Big Shot's Funeral* will become a hot seller is not too far away.



Photo by Cui Jun

Comments from Filmgoers On the Internet

Angeldie:

No professional theories or deep thoughts came into my mind when I was watching the movie, and all I could do was laugh. I guess that is what Feng Xiaogang intended to do.

Cool Sweet-Smelling Pill:

This movie is pretty good. The director is smart enough to know what the audiences want, especially what they expect at the end of a year.

61.141.91.

I like this movie, see how bitter the ironies are on the present situation of the advertising and IT industries!

210.51.242

The day I went to see *Big Shot's Funeral*, the cinemas were full all the time. It is not easy for Chinese people to spend money at the cinema nowadays. I did not like Feng Xiaogang very much before, but the *Big Shot's Funeral* is very good. I feel it's worthwhile.

Chapter 1

Lucy asked, "Yoyo, Tyler wants to know if you think the life of an emperor is a tragedy?"

Yoyo stopped shooting, thought for a while and shook his head firmly, "No. He had many beautiful women. He might change to a new one every night if he wanted and need not pay: the government paid. I have only one wife and she divorced me, so my life should be called a tragedy."

After those words Yoyo moved the camera back from his eyes. "Tell Tyler exactly what I said, don't omit anything." Behind the camera, Yoyo urged Lucy again. It was nice to be with the old Tyler, but Lucy stood in the way and was always reluctant to be an honest interpreter. Even Yoyo, the man who was almost English-free, could tell Lucy's translation was "No Good".

Lucy gave Yoyo an unhappy glance and translated for Tyler.

Tyler laughed from ear to ear when he got Yoyo's opinion and nodded to Lucy, "He is direct. That is ordinary Chinese people's thinking of their emperor."

Still worrying over the accuracy of Lucy's translation, Yoyo decided to have a talk with Tyler. Moving his face from behind the camera, using the only English words in his mind, Yoyo said to Tyler, "No money no woman, that is..." He wanted to say "tragedy".



but didn't know the English words. So he turned to Lucy for help, but that girl raised her head and looked into the sky, pretending to hear nothing.

But Tyler had got what Yoyo meant; he smiled and added for him "No Good".

Chapter 2

Tyler drew himself back from deep thoughts of grief and turned back to Yoyo, seriously, "Yo, Buddhists believe people have a next life and the flesh dying is not the end of life but the beginning of a new life. Do you believe that? Death doesn't sound so dreadful that way."

Lucy translated for Yoyo in simple words, "He asked whether you believe in life after death."

Yoyo shook his head, "No, that's cheating nonsense from those monks. When people die, everything ends."

Lucy lowered her voice and said to Yoyo softly, "You see, he is quite down. Could you say something to cheer him up?"



This unusually friendly attitude made Yoyo take the hint. Holding on to the back of his chair, Yoyo craned forward to Tyler and said, "We Chinese have a saying, early death, early reincarnation, that means poor days in this life don't matter, for you still have the next life. Bad things would turn into good things in the next life." Then

he looked at Lucy obsequiously. Lucy returned a reserved amicable smile, and then translated for Tyler with a lot of embellishment. Approving smiles climbed up Tyler's face. He turned back and put his hands on Yoyo's shoulders and said, "Chinese people are really good at comforting themselves, very nice. Ha ha, if there was a next life, Woody Allen for sure would take enough briefs with him."

Yoyo stared at Tyler, carefully studying his facial expressions and body gestures, and finally understood, "Yeah, yeah". Then he gestured and said in "Yoyo English", "Chinese seventy years older



people die, no bad finish, is good finish ..." Racking his brains, Yoyo couldn't find any more words to go on. He was stumped.

Oh, that's it! "Everybody drink ... cheers, 葬礼 (funeral) happy ..." Yoyo was almost dripping with sweat and had to ask help from Lucy. "How to say '葬礼' in English? It choked me to death!"

With a charming smile, Lucy said, "Okay, but you got to pay for that." Helpless Yoyo whistled, pulled 20 US dollars, just demanded by Lucy, out of his pants' pocket and put it into Lucy's hand.

"What on earth do you want to say?" Lucy asked in a winner's special triumphant tone.

Chapter 4

Since there were no strong objections from Lucy, Tyler's funeral stepped into the practical operating stage. Yoyo and Wang Xiaozhu had begun to construct the main stage in the Ancestral Temple's square.

With a cigarette dangling from his lips and crookedly wearing a hat, Yoyo was discussing the decoration project with the stage design director. Formally dressed Wang Xiaozhu moved to him from the other side of the Ancestral Temple's square, with a bag under one arm, he was shouting down his cell phone, "Only covering Asia is not enough, I need to cover the whole world, everywhere! Yeah, rent the Russian communications satellites! Go to find GM Sun of Global Films and tell him, if he pays satellites' rent, I will authorize him the relaying right of the funeral!" Then Wang Xiaozhu put the cell phone back into his pocket and patted Yoyo on the shoulders, "Live for the whole world! So no



complaints of being unable to watch could ever happen! People could only make a choice between wanting to watch it or not."

Yoyo began to stroke his nose again, "Hey man, it goes too fast and I am a little bit flustered, I feel like I'm in a dream."

Chapter 7

That night, in a big garage where

several buses were parked, many people were busy working. A hearse made up from a bus stopped in the center. Tyler's portrait and black armband bouquets hung at the front. Some staff from advertising companies painted a PC advertisement on the side. Yoyo and Wang Xiaozhu, the general directors at the working site, were already worn out.

Unable to last for one more second, Yoyo sat on the ground and had his meal. Wang Xiaozhu had finished eating and went to work.

In a rush, Wang Xiaozhu came back again and asked, "Yoyo, could you find space for one more advertisement on the body of the hearse? This idea is terrific, many customers are now fighting for advertisements on the hearse." Yoyo pointed to the rear of the bus with his chopsticks, "Advertisement on the rear has been sold to VS credit card, that half also has sold out, now only the top is empty." Wang Xiaozhu walked to the other side and saw a cell phone advertisement had already been painted on. So he moved back, scratching his head thinking for a while, and said, "God, all spaces sold out in a mere afternoon! Okay, the top doesn't matter, give it to me!"

Extract from *Big Shot's Funeral*

Translated by Shi Xinyu





Feng Xiaogang and his wife Xu Fan

You Girls Compete for Favor In New Year Film

By Zhu Lin and Xiao Xia

'You Girls'—the girl actresses who cooperate with Ge You, the well-known movie star—keep changing and Ge You remains stable. This is the rule adhered to by Feng Xiaogang, one of the most successful directors in China, in making New Year Films over the past five years. Ge You provides a label for Feng's New Year Movies, while You Girls share all kinds of colors.

"Someone has to change. If the girls change, the man stays," Ge You jokes. Whoever the actress is, Ge You permanently holds the role of main actor.

"My principle is to choose an actress first, and then arrange the story of her role around her," says Feng. From 1998 till now, four beauties have cooperated with Ge You, all renowned Chinese actors.

Liu Bei, Innocent Angel in Part A, Part B

The first You Girl is Liu Bei starring in *Part A, Part B*. The movie starred as China's New Year Film at Spring Festival in 1998. A theme of dreams runs through the story, expressing people's desire for fame, money, power, challenge and beauty. Ge and Liu set up a factory of dream production, helping different people to put their dreams into reality.

With a ponytail and lively eyes, Liu has the typical features of an urban beauty. Finally the characters played by Ge and Liu get married. At the end of the film, the couple joins an apple ritual, which is part of the traditional Chinese wedding. When they are asked to take a bite the apple suspended between them at the same time, the string pulls the apple up. An "accidental" kiss is the result, with a cheeky grin from Liu.

Xu Fan, Feng's Perfect Match

Xu Fan, Feng's wife is the second You Girl starring in *Be There or Be Square* shown

in 1999. The story takes place in America. Ge and Xu encounter various situations that make the audience crack up each time.

Feng is especially satisfied regarding Xu's cooperation with Ge, "The reason I chose Xu is that she is the kind of actress with an in-born talent to perform tragic roles." Feng believes Xu and Ge can bring out their best working together. At the end of that year, Feng got married with Xu.

The story was all the rage right through 1999. Another unforgettable kiss wraps up the film. When Xu kisses Ge, pulling out his false teeth, she cries, "Everything belonging to you is false!"

Wu Qien-Lien, Unplaced Star

Wu Qien-Lien is much more popular than Xu and Liu in terms of international fame, but she got the worst feedback in *Sorry Baby* shown in 2000. "Compared with Ge, her acting means nothing in the film," said Wan Liansheng, a film critic.

The story tells about a young girl's choice for true love between a vane money-grabber and an honest man. It seems that the female star from Taiwan Province is out of place. She doesn't fit so well with Feng's style.

Rosamund Kwan, Plain Performance

New Year 2001 was lacking something as Feng didn't produce a film to mark the occasion. Now he has reappeared with *Big Shot's Funeral* and the fourth You Girl Rosamund Kwan.

At the age of 39, Kwan is totally blanked under the shining talent of Ge You. The out-dated Hong Kong beauty was proved to be nothing but a pretty face in the film.

When Liu Pei and Xu Fan starred in Feng's New Year Films, they were climbing their career ladder. Wu and Kwan merely provided the lure of the box office.



Be There or Be Square



Part A, Part B



Sorry, Baby



Big Shot's Funeral



Zhang Yuan

Photo by Cui Jun

Sixth Generation Director Switches to Patriotic Beijing Opera

By Zhu Lin

Zhang Yuan, the leading representative of the Sixth Generation directors in China has given up his style of rebellion, and has switched to a patriotic story called *Madam Jiang*.

Madam Jiang was one of the most famous heroines killed in a Kuomintang prison before 1949. After watching its Beijing Opera version staged by China National Beijing Opera Theatre several months ago, Zhang decided to adapt it into a film. He doesn't think it's strange for him to choose this subject, "Jiang is a patriotic heroine, but she's also got typical characteristics of a young lady, a mother. I don't treat this subject as propaganda."

Most of Zhang's artistic experiments did not reach public view because of his preference for rebelling and marginal subjects, but his talent can't be denied. *Seventeen Years*, his first film permitted to be shown in China won the best director award at the 56th International Venice Film Festival, 1999. In October



The opera Madam Jiang

2000, UNESCO presented the movie the Special Cinema Prize for the Culture of Peace.

Zhang is not the first director to emphasize a Chinese patriot's psychological world. The television series *Long March* aired this June was approved for its emphasis on the Chinese leaders' inner world. It won millions of Chinese audiences' hearts, especially among young people.

Having graduated from the Beijing Film Institute in 1989, Zhang is one of the best known Sixth Generation directors. He started to get international fame by making MTV for Cui Jian in 1991, the father of Chinese rock's *Wild on the Snow*. It won the MTV International Viewers' Choice Award and soon became an instant hit throughout Asia.



Photo by Chen Jianli

Madam Swing

By Yi He

Enthusiasm for Jazz has been stirred up since the Beijing International Jazz Festival held last November. *Madam Swing*, the Russian Jazz musical performed by Tereshkin Jazz Dancing Troupe on December 26 to 28 at the 21st Century Theater increased this rage.

As the Silver Award Winner of the Leo's Jazz Dance Choreography Competition held in 2000, the troupe struck Chinese audiences by their up-to-date technique and concept of modern dance.

Musical Students Have Long Road Ahead

By Zhu Lin

Debut concert of the senior students in the Department for Musicals at the Central Institute of Drama showed their impressive potential, but also proved a hard way ahead before the students.

The school set up a Department for Musicals from 1994. "We wanted to follow the increasing global interest in musicals," explained Liu Hongmei, class teacher of the students. Some actors and actresses from 'Four Seasons', the famous Japanese musical company were invited to be teachers at that time. The 1995 senior students staged *Cats* and *West Side Story* in 1999, but didn't get good box office ratings.

Liu thinks people need a long time to accept new things, "We can't give up trying just because musicals in China haven't been popular." Besides, the students graduated from the Department for



Photo by Zhuang Jian

Musicals have received a comprehensive education in the performing arts involving dancing, singing and acting. That is crucial to a performer's development. Sun Honglei, a graduate student from the

1997 class of the department was chosen by Zhang Yimou for his noted movie *My Father and Mother*.

Due to financial problems however, the school can't afford expensive microphones costing thirty thousand yuan each. "The sound effects were so bad. I felt sorry for the students," commented Michael Reynolds from the audience. In addition, the students have a long way to go to improve their dancing and vocal techniques to sing pieces from musicals. Their voices and stage presence always dangle between classical opera to pop concert, showing they are unaccustomed to performing musicals.

The performance was at their school theater from December 26 2001 to January 5. The program includes arias and dances from well-known musicals such as *Phantom of the Opera*, *Cats*, *West Side Story*, *Evita* and *Les Miserable*.

Add Coolness to the Winter

By Jiao Pei

Nowadays, people don't want to control their desire for delicious food, even in cold winter, they still like to try sweet and cool ice cream. For young girls, maybe the most important thing is to keep slim, while satisfying their appetite for ice cream. Mondo Gelato is a special shop for Italian ice cream, with a fat content of just 2-8% fat.

Most people do not know ice cream was invented in Italy, developed by Sicilians using a freezing process involving ice and salt. The common ice cream is made with a much higher percentage of air and fat content. Premium brand ice creams are about 16% fat while super premium products are over 20% fat. Gelato's fat content is much lower, and is frozen less deeply, tastes lighter, while retaining an intense flavor.

Situated in the Lufthansa Center, Mondo Gelato Beijing, the first branch shop in Asia, opened in November last year. The ice creams are called artistic style, because their colors are various and some have unusual shapes. Altogether there are over 100 flavors, and now the shop often offer about 40 kinds. Everything is made daily by hand and contains no preservatives. The materials and machines are all imported from Italy. Mondo Gelato has four kinds, gelato, sorbet, yogurt and soya gelato. Sorbet is a non-dairy, non-fat, fruit ice cream. Sugar-free, soya gelato contains no cholesterol, as all ingredients are vegetable in origin. It is rich in proteins, mineral salts, phosphores, iron and carbohydrates. They also offer Affogato, or ice cream with a shot of espresso coffee (pictured right).

Ice cream costs 16 yuan per scoop, and they boast that their coffee is as good as you will get in Italy.

Add: 2F, Lufthansa Center, 52 Liangmaqiaolu, Chaoyang District.

Open: 9am-9pm.

Tel: 64606122.

Web: www.Mondogelato.com



Lifelike Insects

By Jiao Pei

Countless colorful 'insects' are displayed in a small shop that specializes in making fake insects strictly true to life. This shop is a display place for the products of Beijing Art Insect Works, which has engaged in making imitation insects and other naturalistic decorations for ten years.

These handicrafts are made of natural materials. There are two main kinds; imitation insects, made of clay, metallic wire, paper and other materials, and birds, fish and plants, which are made of foam plastics, bark and feathers. The manager says their target is making a perfect combination of nature and art. The materials are non-poisonous and harmless to health. The kind of small insects made of clay are painted with beautiful colors and are attached to a round magnet, so they can stick to the refrigerator or walls. Some are wood-framed, the same size as the real ones. Those products are multi-functional; they can be hung for decorations, practical tools, and appreciation.

The manager, Li Ji, is an insect-lover. To start with, he just liked to collect insect specimens, then he found that imitation insects are quite popular overseas, so he started making imitation insects around 10 years ago. Now he operates a factory that employs 50 persons. The shop in Ladies' Street is his first attempt to sell the products in a retail store. If it goes well, he plans to open other shops around Beijing. Li also puts great emphasis on protecting of ecology. He refuses



Photo by Chen Shuyi

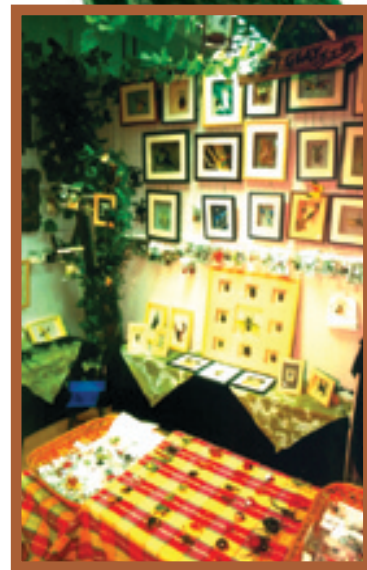


Photo by Cui Hao

to cooperate with those companies that engage in specimen collecting. He tries to make people interested in insects, without threatening their existence.

Other decorations on sale are bark pictures, which can be described as "recycled art". They seem not to be processed much and keep their own colors and quality.

The prices are reasonable. Small pieces cost 10 yuan for three pieces, while bigger ones can sell for 100 yuan or more. They also take bulk orders.

Add: A-18, Area A, Ladies' Street, east of the Lufthansa Center, opposite Flower Street, Chaoyang District. **Open:** 9am-8pm. **Tel:** 63266457. **Web:** www.Insectarts.com



Photo by Yang Bo

A Taste of the Mongolian Grassland

By Jiang Zhong

Mongolians in Beijing regard the restaurant Tenggelitala (Heavenly Grassland), as their family dining room. Over the entrance to the hall of the restaurant hangs a banner bearing the greeting - "Welcome to the Family of Mongolians". There are yurts, those huge Mongolian tents, on the roof of the three-story building, situated in the western suburbs of Beijing. Customers are welcome to enjoy their Mongolian meals in the tents. The decoration and interior of the tents are all in typical Mongolian style, and if you order a Genghis Khan Roast Lamb, the most renowned Mongolian dish, said to be served to Genghis Khan's soldiers as reward on their triumphant return from battle, you will have the chance to enjoy a traditional Mongolian rite. An exciting dance performance begins after dinner. In the hall on the second floor, Mongolian artists will perform a wonderful Mongolian Wedding Ceremony. The wedding ceremonies of ordinary people and of the imperial officials are included in the performance. The atmosphere is like a carnival, and you might even be invited to join them. On the first floor, souvenirs including Mongolian knives, necklaces, bracelets, garments and arts and crafts are on sale at reasonable prices. **Add:** near Dinghushi, Haidian District. **Open:** 11am-2pm, 5:30pm-9pm. **Tel:** 68150808 / 68288322.

What's your favorite shop, stand, bar or restaurant? We will be very happy to share your experience with all our readers and don't forget, a mystery gift is waiting for you if we print your story. Please contact us at 65902524 or 13910916642. Email: shopping@ynet.com.

Yue-Sai Wa Wa- A Little Ambassador Connecting East and West

By Li Dan

Blond haired and blue eyed Barbie holds a solid, and up to now at least, unassailable position in the doll market worldwide. Little girls spend hours playing with their Barbie dolls, dressing them up, organizing tea parties and putting them to bed when they're sleepy. For adult women, Barbie brings back memories of childhood. Now however, Barbie has some competition. Yue-Sai Wa Wa (wa wa is Chinese for doll or child) is increasing her popularity around the world, especially since her release in the U.S. last August.

The originator Yue-Sai Kan, a well-known Chinese American cosmetics producer and TV host, designed the doll based on Chinese facial features, with long black hair, black eyes and yellow-based skin tone, and dressed her in both traditional Chinese outfits and clothing that combines Chinese and western styles.

Kan moved to New York at the age of 16. A neighbor once asked her to bring back a doll from China. Confident that she would find many, Kan went to numerous department stores in major cities, only to find they all had blond hair. "Could this be one of the reasons why so many Asians I know think they are not beautiful? (But I think they are!) How can we allow our standard of beauty to be only blonde?" And so the idea of defining an Asian image of beauty came into being.

Yue-Sai doll is a 16-year-old Chinese American. She's a sweet girl, who studies well, goes to parties with friends, and shows filial respect to her parents. There are two main styles of Yue-Sai doll, collectable and play. Among the collectables, one of the most famous is Red Millennium Wa Wa, wearing an elegant long red gown. All Yue-Sai dolls come with accessories such as furniture, changeable clothes, mirrors and handbags. More and more people in the world are beginning to know the lovely Asian doll, and parents like to give Yue-Sai dolls to their little girls, for the real world we live in is truly culturally diverse. Kan says she sees her creation as a little ambassador connecting East and West. By the way, Barbie's strong compatriot Yue-Sai Doll hasn't got a boyfriend ... yet.

You can find Yue-Sai dolls in most major department stores in Beijing. Prices range from 150 to 400 yuan (much less than Barbie). No little girl should be without one!



Red Millennium Wa Wa

There's Jade, And There's Jade!

By Li Dan

It can be said that jade carvings record Chinese history, culture and spirit of the Chinese people, and appreciation of this art form is deeply rooted throughout the different strata of society.

Of course you can find piles of pendants or other small jade articles at Panjiayuan. However you shouldn't expect them all to be exactly what the vendors claim them to be! Stall holders frequently claim their jade articles are genuine Ming or Qing dynasty antiques, whereas more often than not, they are nothing more than crude quality fakes. One young vendor insisted that the jade bracelet he was offering was at least 500 years old, but when asked some details, it seemed he couldn't tell anything. A customer told that once he found an "exquisite" jade piece, which the vendor claimed to date from the Song Dynasty. After some hard bargaining, the price was cut from 800 to 300 yuan. Just before the jade was wrapped, the customer used a piece of paper to wipe off the dirt on its surface, and finally found it was obviously a brand new forgery. The vendor then offered to cut the price down to 100 yuan, and as you can imagine, the customer left in anger.

Here is another story. There was a white jade pendant, beautifully carved, from the late Qing Dynasty. It was actually worth around 2,000 yuan, but the vendor stated a price of 10,000 yuan.

Two Taiwanese



Photo by Chen Shuyi

so fell in love with the jade that they would not let it out of their hands. They felt embarrassed to try to cut the price too much and so offered 5,000 yuan. The worldly-wise vendor insisted not to agree, and finally, a price of 6,000 yuan was agreed on. Asked why he was so stubborn, the vendor said striking a bargain too quickly will leave both sides feeling uncomfortable.

The jade area at Panjiayuan bustles with activity on weekends, with both local and overseas visitors. People go there because they like the diversity of jade wares. Most of the pieces on sale are brand new, or at least not so "antique" as the sellers pretend. Some vendors happily admit the items they are selling are not unauthentic, and as a French friend of mine says, "I like the beautiful objects here even if they are not genuine antiques. They tell me the story of China, sometimes the struggle of the people, recent and more ancient struggles. After they become mine, objects are part of my life and talk to me when I am alone at home. As well as nice people, I try to surround myself with beautiful objects."

A little tip: If you want to buy a piece of jade carving, you had better take a magnifying glass with you. In fake pieces, you can often see air bubbles, but never in real ones. **Where:** Area A, Panjiayuan Flea Market. **Open:** Sat & Sun, 7am-4pm.

Panjiayuan
潘
Flea Market

Beijing Housing Loan Center To Decrease Guarantee Fees

By Wang Dandan

Beijing Housing Loan Guarantee Center, opened last Friday, with the aim of decreasing citizens' assurance fees when purchasing an apartment.

Citizens who buy apartments with accumulation fund loans, which are provided by the government, will be guaranteed by the center. With the guarantee, purchasers can get a maximum loan of 390,000 yuan.

How is it different from an insurance company?

The center aims to set up a new system of protecting both the Beijing Housing Loan Administration Center and the purchasers' legal rights, according to Miao Leru, Director of the Beijing Bureau of Land and Apartment Administration, in a press release last Friday. At the same time, it also decreases the loan risk of both parties.

Furthermore, the center will minimize guarantee fees and simplify loan procedures. Before the establishment of this center, purchasers would go to the insurance company to get a guarantee on their loans, however the guarantee fee is much higher and involves more complicated procedures.

How much would be saved?

Four citizens have already obtained a loan through the guarantee of the center. The average of these loans is 280,000 yuan for 10



years. Had they got the guarantee from an insurance company, the cost would have been about 7,700 yuan. However they will only pay a little over 2,000 yuan for the guarantee fee from the center, a saving of around 5,600 yuan.

What are the procedures of the center and what do they provide?

When someone applies for a housing loan, the center provides a complete guar-

antee, with the purchased apartment as mortgage. Should the purchaser fail to repay the loan on time, the center would negotiate a change of the loan period with the Beijing Housing Loan Administration Center and assigned banks; either to arrange changes in the loan contract according to the income of the purchaser or would pay the rest loan and interest and take the apartment. They would also provide employment training to purchaser to increase his or her income. If a purchaser cannot repay the loan at all, the center would put the apartment up for auction and repay the rest of the loan with this money. If the purchaser refuses to pay the loan, the center will take him to court.

Who is qualified to get the guarantee?

Beijing locals or those with a valid residential permit; stable income; legal purchasing contract with developers; sufficient down-payment; agreement on the apartment as mortgage. The most important factor is that the purchaser has the right to get the accumulation fund. The center is not able to offer commercial loans at present.

Up to now, foreigners are not eligible for guarantees from this center, as they cannot get the accumulation fund. However, with the entry to WTO, this is expected to change before long.

An Apartment Can Not Be Sold

By Wang Dandan / Yan Ming

James Black purchased an apartment near the south Fourth Ring Road. As James plans to live in China for a relatively long time, about 10 years, he decided to buy an apartment, rather than renting one, and then sell it when he is ready to leave China.

He carefully looked at several projects and eventually found one he was satisfied with. Everything was quite smooth during all the purchasing procedures except one detail. After he had paid all the money, he asked the developer to get the property right certificate from the Beijing Real Estate Bureau. However, the developer told him that he could not get the certificate.

James was then told that the project wasn't licensed as a foreign-approved apartment by the China Ministry of Construction.

There is nothing in the law to help James. He can rent his house, but can not resell it.

Background:

There are five certificates the project has to have:

The Right of Use of State-Owned Land, the Planning Permit of Land Use, the Planning Permit of Engineering, the Construction Permit of the Project, and the Sales

(or Sales in advance) Permit of the Commercial House. For the foreign-approved project, it should be licensed as a foreign-approved apartment by the China Ministry of Construction.



Pictures by Xie Feng

"HOUSING" welcomes your feedback: What kind of difficulties do you encounter when looking for housing in Beijing? What kind of information do you need? What can we help you with? Our E-mail: housing@ynet.com
Tel: 65902522 Fax: 65902525



Target: Zhaolong Hotel
When: 18:30-19:30, Tuesday, Jan. 1st
Hotel Detective: Wang Dandan

Annie Morrison, British

I am here to celebrate the New Year and I like the activities the hotel has arranged. It seems quite exotic. My child wanted to come to China when she was a little girl. And she chose this hotel because of its mixture of eastern and western decoration style.

Maya Tali, India

When I first came to Beijing, the taxi driver suggested I live here. I completely got accustomed to its service and do not want to change to a new one. I know other hotels of the same standard might be better than this one, but I am used to it.

Pierre Janque, France

I came to China several times and each time I would stay in a different hotel. I want to know if there are any differences among these hotels. If yes, I will stay in the best one; if no, any of them will be my choice, depending on my working place.

Office prices

COFCO Plaza:

Rent: US\$42/month/sqm(net)

Location: Jianguomennei Avenue, Dongcheng District. Located in Jianguomennei Ave., facing Chang'an Street and close to Jianguomen and Beijing Railway Station and subway station.

Continental Building:

Rent: US\$19/month/sqm

Location: Gulouwai Street, Dongcheng District. Located between North Second Ring Road and North Third Ring Road.

First Shanghai Center:

Rent: US\$26/month/sqm

Location: Liangmaqiao Road, Chaoyang District.

Grand Place:

Rent: US\$26.5/month/sqm

Location: Anli Road, Chaoyang District. In Asian Game Village.

Hyundai Millennium Tower:

Rent: US\$28/month/sqm

Location: Xiaoyun Road, Chaoyang District. Being close to the Lufthansa Center and Landmark towers.

Jing An Center:

Rent: US\$23-27/month/sqm

Location: Zuojiazhuang, Chaoyang District. It is close to Beijing International Exhibition Center, Royal Hotel and Carrefour Supermarket and also near the Third Ring Road.

Lufthansa Center:

Rent: US\$52/month/sqm(net)

Location: Liangmaqiao Road, Chaoyang District. Close to east Third Ring Road.

Pacific Century Place:

Rent: US\$36/month/sqm

Location: Gongtibi Road, Chaoyang District. Close to East Third Ring.

Silver Tower:

Rent: US\$35/month/sqm

Location: Northeast Third Ring Road, Chaoyang District. Close to Hilton Hotel, located conveniently near the Third Ring Road and airport express way.

The above information is weekly updated and for reference only DTZ Debenham Tie Leung provides the above information. For further information, please go to www.dtz.com www.dtz.bj.cn
Email: residential@dtz.bj.cn

Beijing Foreign-sale Residential Market

By Wang Dandan

Even though the world economy is slowing, confidence in the long-term strength of China's economy continues to grow. Governments policies designed to spur consumption, such as the lowering of interest rates and reserve requirements for banks, have succeeded in the short term.

Additionally, the signing of bilateral trade accords between China and other nations to join the WTO has encouraged foreign investors to take a more long-term view of business in China. When China becomes a fully-fledged member of the WTO, sales of foreign goods will increase, and this increase in demand will likely translate into rising sale prices and rents in the foreign residential sector.

Following is the market research by DTZ Debenham Tie Leung.

Demand

With the increase in the supply of properties this quarter combined with the decrease in demand in some sectors, many landlords continued to offer attractive lease packages. Many offered incentives that included club memberships and paid utilities to attract new tenants. The demand for high-quality serviced apartments and villas, however, continued to dominate the residential scene that allowed properties such as the Beijing Riviera to retain higher asking rentals. Chaoyang district remains its popular status, enjoys a strong client base and stable rental rate.

Rental & Price Index

DTZ research reveals that average apartment and villa rental rates for foreign sale and lease properties decreased 0.12%, from US\$21.41

in the second quarter to v21.38 in the third quarter.

The breakdown for the high-end apartment sector was US\$27.54 in the third quarter as compared to 27.02 in the second quarter - an increase of 1.95%. Medium range apartments were US\$19.59 in the third quarter to 19.51 in the first quarter, - an increase of 0.39%, while the low-end sector was at US\$14.11 in the third quarter and US\$14.42 in the second quarter - a decrease of 1.19%.

The breakdown for the high-end villa sector was US\$26.85 in the third quarter and US\$27.05 in the second quarter - a decrease of 1.19%.

Summary

The global slowdown has led more foreign enterprises to China to be more conscious of their spending and expansion plans. But China's impending WTO entry and the success of the 2008 Olympic bid has boosted confidence in the real estate market in Beijing.

More real estate developers seeking to take maximum advantage of the opportunity are increasing their investments without careful calculations. While the prospect of WTO entry and the Olympic Games promise an increase in demand, an over-heated market could cause an oversupply and eventually a fall in market price.

With a continual supply of new projects like Sunny Region and the Ascott Beijing, theoretically there should still be mounting pressure on the landlords to reduce rents. While the Olympics can provide a short-term boost to some rents and prices in Beijing, the most significant impact of the Games lies in the development of the new district around the Olympic corridor.

Deposit or Payment?



By Wang Yang

Bob Brown wants to buy a house in Beijing, as he plans to stay here for some time. After looking at different projects over the course of several months, he eventually settled on one in Chaoyang District. In order to secure the apartment, Brown paid the developer a 40,000 yuan deposit.

He paid the deposit in two installments. The first installment was 15,000 yuan, and he was given a receipt saying the money was for the deposit. For the second installment of 25,000 yuan, the receipt said that money was part of the payment (not the deposit), but he did not notice the difference.

Shortly after this, his company unexpectedly transferred him to Japan, and Brown wanted to cancel his purchase of the apartment. But the developer refused to return his money, saying that Brown had broken the contract. He took the matter to court.

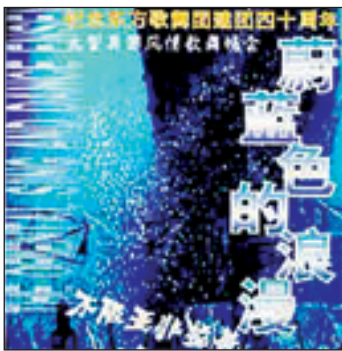
According to the law, when a purchaser breaks the contract, the payment should be returned, but not the deposit. And even the deposit cannot all be kept by the developer.

Brown got the 25,000 yuan back, but the 15,000 yuan was kept by the developer, as he did not specify in the contract how much of the deposit should be returned in the event he didn't go through with the purchase.

It is suggested by Xu Chendi, a lawyer with Beijing Zhongsheng Law Firm, that you should regulate in the purchasing agreement about the deposit, if you can not buy the house. Usually the developer should not keep all the deposit, and should return back to you most of it, around 80% to 90%. Although Brown was lucky that the developer wrote the receipt out for payment, rather than deposit, he still lost some money.

Performances

The Young Performers in Wonderful Broadway presented by Guojun Entertainment. **Where:** Century Theater, Chaoyang District. **When:** Jan. 4-5, 7:30pm, Jan. 5, 2:30pm. **Admission:** 80-380 yuan. **Tel:** 64660032, 64664805. Ticket delivery: 13671099765

**Blue Romance**

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the founding of Dongfang Song & Dance Troupe, a song & dance performance will be presented. It is the first public performance in Beijing and will showcase dances from a variety of countries. Featuring over 100 performers of the Dongfang Song & Dance Troupe. **Where:** Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng District. **When:** Jan. 11-12, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 180-680 yuan. **Tel:** 65001188-5682.

Death and the Maiden

A story of revenge in South America. **Where:** Mini Theater of People's Art Theater, 22 Wangfujing Dajie, bus 101, 108, 112 to Meishuguan (National Art Gallery), walk south for 100 meters. **When:** till Jan. 22, 7:15pm. **Admission:** 80 yuan. **Tel:** 65250123.

Music

New York Musical Night

Alto: Lori Brown Mirabal; Soprano: Anna Vikre; Tenor: Justin Vickers; Piano: James Lent. Liaoning Symphony Orchestra, conductor: Niklaus Wyss. Program: Mozart; Queen of the Night Aria from the Magic Flute, Verdi; Canzone Del Velo (from Don Carlos), Drinking song (from La Traviata); Bizet: Habanera, Flower Song, Sequidilla duet Jose (from Carmen).

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall, Zhongshan Park.

When: Jan. 6, 7:30pm.

Admission: 100-1000 yuan.

Tel: 65598485.

**Night in the Grassland - West-ern Folk Songs Chorus**

Sound of Spring Chorus. Conductor:

Qiu Li. **Where:** Forbidden City Concert Hall, Zhongshan Park. **When:** Jan. 5, 7:30pm. **Admission:** 30-280 yuan, 500 yuan VIP. **Tel:** 65598285.

Chinese Rock'n'Roll

Bands: Tookoo, Smile, PK14, Multi-element, Sugar, Pan Jue. **Where:** Honey Bar, Xitiao Hotel, bus 111, 105, 808 to Xinkai Hutong. **When:** Jan. 12. **Admission:** 30 yuan (including a draft beer). **Tel:** 68154488 - 38055 (Gao Bo).

Band Performance

Chun Qiu, Lonely Summer. Jan. 4, 8pm. Direct Action serial performance, Jan. 5. An Shi, Attack, Pai, the Fragments of Sound, Bian Zou Space, Jan. 10.

Where: Get Lucky Bar, 4 Taiyang-gonglu, east of the south gate of Jingmaodaxue. **Admission:** 20, 30 yuan. **Tel:** 64299109.

Music at bars

Dance Friday at Big Easy-Jan. 4, 9pm, 65086776. African band Mitabe, at Jam House, Jan. 4, 9pm, 65063845. Philippine Band 'Pryzm', at SGT, Jan. 4, 9pm, 65008088. Afanti, at Jam House, Jan. 5, 9pm, 65063845. Focus, at Schiller's 3, Jan. 5, 9pm, 65931078. Try 52 Cocktails with live band music, No. 52, Jan. 5, 64164697. Philippine Band Performance: Mix Company, Hard Rock, Jan. 6, 9pm, 65906688 -2571.

Exhibitions

Works by Tian Xifeng - A Date with Spring

Tian is famous with his traditional Chinese realistic painting characterized by fine brushwork and close attention to detail. Some of his works have gained awards in national competitions.

Where: Melodic Art Gallery, 14 Jianguomenwai Dajie, opposite the Friendship Store, Chaoyang District.

When: till Jan 31, 9am-5pm.

Admission: free.

Tel: 65158123.

**"Make Home Wherever It Is" the exhibition of Embassies' Art Works**

Over 300 pieces of works from over 40 embassies are on exhibition, including paintings, sculptures and folk art.

Where: China Revolutionary Museum, next to National Museum of Chinese History, east side of Tian'anmen Square.

When: till Jan. 27.

Admission: 15 yuan.

Tel: 65263355.

**Chinese Paintings**

Landscapes and portraits by Feng Linzhang, Sun Jianlin, Liang Yan, Song Di.

Where: East Hall, Wan Fung Gallery.

"Their Words" Joint Oil Paintings Exhibition

Oil works by Liu Baoming, Xiao Se, Li Chunyao, also etchings by Xie Feng, Wei Jia and Wen Zhongyan. Artists express their ideas about certain social problems in paintings.

Where: West hall of Wan Fung Gallery, 136 Nanchizi Dajie, Dongcheng District.

When: till Jan. 31, 9am-5pm.

Admission: free.

Tel: 65233320.

Imitation?

New York-based artist Chen Danqing reproduces images from

Chinese and western classical and contemporary paintings, calligraphy, currency and magazine photos.



Where: 2F, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Poly Plaza, Tuancheng (团成画廊) Gallery, Dongcheng District.

When: till the end of Jan, 9am-9pm.

Tel: 65001188 ext. 3278.

Photos from the Far West

Photographer Li Hu has a passion for the far west Tibetan plateau. The result is an exhibition of breathtaking landscapes.

Where: Beijing Concert Hall Gallery, 2F, 1 Beixinhuajie, Liubukou, West Chang'an Avenue, Xicheng District, bus 1, 4, 57, 52, 802, 14 to Liubukou.

When: till the end of Jan. 9:30am-9:30pm.

Tel: 66057006.

Stark Natural Beauty

Qiao Xiaoguang's paintings are born of traditional Chinese folk art and are highly prized for their powerful depiction of stark natural beauty.

Where: Han Mo Gallery (翰墨画廊), outside the Middle School of the Mechanical Institute, Sanlitun Beijie, Chaoyang District.

When: till Jan 10, Tue-Sun, 1:30pm-10:30pm.

Tel: 64166254.

Zhang Daqian Exhibition

Zhang Daqian is one of the most remarkable artists of the 20th century. His works, influenced by traditional Chinese and western artistic traditions are full of elements of impressionism and abstract expressionism. If you haven't seen this exhibition yet, hurry! It closes Saturday.

Where: National Museum of Chinese History. **Admission:** 50 yuan. **When:** till Jan 5, 8:30am-4:30pm. **Tel:** 65128321.

Horses in Painting

Works by Wu Yuanmou.

Where: National Gallery, 1 Wusidajie, Dongcheng District, bus 104, 103, 108, 111 to Meishuguan. **When:** Jan 6-11, 9am-5pm. **Tel:** 64016234.

Activities

Squash

The ultimate mind/body sport: learn the basics of squash and get into shape this winter at a club near you. Improve your fitness, strength, and agility as well as your concentration, patience and decisiveness. Individual lessons for the beginner right through to the advanced player will help you get the best out of this game in a fun way.

Tel: 13501079014 (Jens), Jens@public.east.cn.net.

**Hash House Event**

Hares: Rear Entry

Venue: Mexican Wave Jingshan Park (South Gate at 2:30PM)

When: Jan 6, 2pm.

More info: RDRhead@uop.com



Photo by Lily

Harbin Ice Lantern Art Festival

You will find a magnificent display of ice sculptures, all beautifully lit.

Where: Ditan (Temple of Earth Park), Andingmen.

When: till March.

Tel: 64216419.

Salsa Pekina!

Free lessons every Friday/Saturday. No partner or experience is needed.

Where: Peter Pan Italian Restaurant, 4 Ritanbeilu, 200 meters east of Ritan Park.

When: from 8:30pm till late.

Admission: 20 yuan with a drink voucher for 20 yuan.

Tel: 65950680 (Peter Pan),

13661324324 (Steve).

Website: www.salsa-pekina.com.

Movies

French Movies

Louis Malle. *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud* (Elevator to the Gallows), Jan.6, 3pm; *Les Amants* (The Lovers). **Where:** The Loft, 4 Gongtibeilu, (in the alley to the west of Pacific Century Place, Chaoyang District.

When: Jan. 13, 3pm.

Tel: 65065592, 65017501.

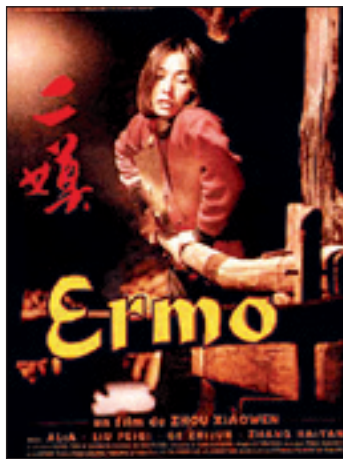
Planet of the Apes

Where: Xindong'an Cinema, 65281988; Yingxie Cinema, 64207759; Stars Cinema, 64040602; Dizhi Cinema, 66171599; Shengli Cinema, 66175758. **When:** Jan 4 -10.

Er Mo

Director: Zhou Xiaowen, starring Zhang Haiyan, Ge Zhijun, Liu Peiqi, and Alia, produced in 1994.

Alia (Genghis Khan's Mother) plays Er Mo, a present-day peasant woman who is overwhelmed by the desire to own the largest color TV in the county. She does everything she can think of to raise the needed money, and in the end she gets more than she ever bargained for. Winner of Best Feature Film at the Locarno Film Festival (Switzerland) and Best Actress at the Mexican Film Festival.



graphical film by Fellini, about the trials and tribulations of film-making. English subtitles.

Where: Cultural Office, Italian Embassy, Dong'erjie, Sanlitun.

When: Jan. 10, 7pm.

Tel: 65322187.

New Opens

Furla's Coming

Italian Fashion is invading Beijing! The company has been making bags for more than 70 years and is a favorite from Harbin to HK.

Where: basement 1, R105-106, China World Shopping Mall, Chaoyang District, subway to Guomao.

When: 10am-9pm.

Tel: 65055978

Picture Perfect

Developing your holiday snapshots is easy in Beijing. But what if you're shooting slide film, or need a contact sheet? The newly opened shop called Oriental Pearl will satisfy all your pro-film needs at down-to-earth prices.

Where: opposite Jingguang Center, northeast corner of East Third Ring Road, Chaoyang District, bus 9, 405, 402 to Hujialou.

When: 8:30am-8pm.

Tel: 65867658.

Butter Flower Art



Butter Flower Art

Butter Flower Art Exhibition

Butter flower art is called one of the "Three Unique Skills" of the Daer Temple, Tibet. The material is butter mixed with various mineral colors and sculpted into different shapes. The sculptures include large buildings, small animals, mountain & river paintings, Buddha figures and fruits.

Where: Yonghe Gong(the Lama Temple), Bei'erhuanlu.

When: till March 31, 9am-5pm.

Tel: 64044499.



Hiking

Yaji Mountain (Yajishan) is located in Pinggu County east of Beijing, which dates back to the Tang Dynasty.

Difficulty:

Degrees of difficulty :1-4. There are five degrees to code walks. 1 is very easy with not much climbing, normally takes one hour. 2 is relaxing but may be a bit hilly, would take two hours. 3 will take two to three hours, but is still reasonably easy. 4 will take three to four hours, and may be difficult for people who are not used to hiking. 5 will take four to five hours, and it's suitable for people who often hike the mountain trails.

What to take and wear: Day pack, water, lunch, good hiking boots, hat, gloves, scarf, layered clothing, wind breaker.

Safety: Beijing Hikers is not responsible for any accidents or injuries incurred on the hikes.

The Route: Starts at the bottom of the hill through part of the village. Then take a few



minutes walk to a temple that was built in the Ming Dynasty. Further up the hill you will see a small temple behind some interesting rock foundations.

How to join BJ Hikers: It is open to everyone. To sign up, email to bjhikers@yahoo.co.uk or call 13701003694.

Cost: Including hot drinks and snacks, 100 yuan for each hike (collected on the bus).

250 yuan for family of three, 300 yuan for family of four, 350 yuan for family of five.

Date: Saturday, Jan. 5.

Pick up: 8:30am at the Lido outside of Starbucks, 9am of Capital Paradise at the front gate.

Come back: 4-4:30pm.



Winter Festivals

by Jiang Zhong

Beijing has welcomed its winter tourism season. Many scenic spots that offer visitors fantastic experiences in warmer seasons are now into their winter schedules. Tourists can find their favorite winter activities throughout the season between late December and early March. There are so many to choose from, you will be hard pressed to make a decision, but don't despair, we will help you to arrange your tour!

2-day tour:

Alternative 1:

We highly recommend a trip to Yanqing (延庆) County.

First day: visit the Badaling Safari Park in the morning; join in the games at Kangxi Grassland (康西草原) in the afternoon; at night visit the ice lantern exhibition in Longqing Gorge (龙庆峡).

Second day: ski in the Shijinglong (石京龙) Ski Resort

Getting there: It is very convenient to drive there; if you don't have your own car (or a like-minded friend who owns a car), you can take bus 919 from Deshengmen (德胜门) to all the resorts, one after another. Alternatively, you can hire a local taxi for around 250 yuan;

Accommodation: There are many hotels around these resorts, prices vary from 150 yuan to 600 yuan per night

Alternative 2:

A two-day tour to Pinggu (平谷) should be a wonderful experience also.

First day: Visit the Jingdong Grand Cave (京东大溶洞) and Jingdong Grand Valley (京东大峡谷) in the morning, or till early afternoon if you stop to ski at the Grand Valley Ski Resort; visit local villages in the afternoon and stay with a local family at night (many hotels also available).

Second day: visit the peach blossom garden and peach planting base for the whole day, you can try the sweet peaches there;

Getting there: Bus 918 from Dongzhimen (东直门) will take you to these resorts; a local taxi will cost around 200 yuan

Accommodation: There are many hotels available, prices vary from 120 yuan to 500 yuan; 60 yuan per person to stay with a local family.

Alternative 3:

Mentougou (门头沟) features countless historical relics. Besides seeing the winter festival, you can visit some famous historical sites as well.

First day: Fun in the snow at Longfengshan (龙凤山) Ski Resort;

Second day: visit nearby Tanzhe (潭柘) and Jietai (戒台) Temples, they are also offering winter activities.

Getting there: Bus 931 will take you to all these resorts; however a taxi is highly recommended for this tour;

Accommodation: Many hotels are available; the prices are relatively low.

1-day tour:

Alternative 1: If you like outdoor adventure, you must not miss the ice climbing festival at Taoyuanxiangu (桃源仙谷), Miyun County. This resort features some ice falls and one large ice column; professional coaches and athletes will offer you guidance and amazing ice climbing demonstrations.

Alternative 2: Fangshan (房山) District is famous for its water-eroded caves. However it is not so interesting for visitors to-

day. We recommend you join in the festival in Shidu (十渡) only.

You can check the listings below for more detailed information about these winter festivals.

Ice and Snow Cultural Festival in Huairou

When: December 1, 2001-February 2002

Where: Huabei (怀北) International Ski Village, Huairou (怀柔) County

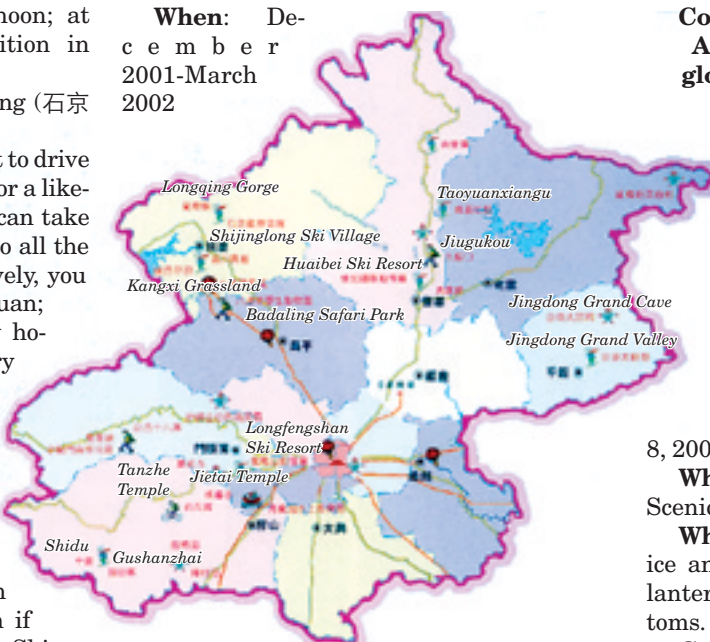
What: Skiing, ice carving and snow carving competitions.

Getting there: bus 936 from Dongzhimen to Jiugukou (九谷口).

Contact: 69659647, 69646250

Ice Lantern Festival in Badaling Safari Park

When: December 2001-March 2002



Where: Beijing Badaling Safari Park

What: Visit to the safari park, see the snow-carving exhibitions. Visitors can create their own snow-carving works.

Getting there: bus 919 from Deshengmen or bus 8 from Andingmen (安定门) to the safari park; or take the Badaling Expressway and take exit 18

Admittance: 70 yuan for adults, 35 yuan for children

Ice and Snow Pastime Festival in Mentougou

When: December 16, 2001-February 28, 2002

Where: Longfengshan Ski Village, Yongding Town (永定镇), Mentougou District

What: skiing, sledding, snowmobile and snow bicycle

Getting there: bus 931 from Pingguoyuan Subway Station to Fengcun (冯村).

Contact: 69843710

Skating Festival at Qinglonghu

When: December 21, 2001-February 28, 2002

Where: Qinglonghu Aquatic Park (青龙湖水上乐园), Huairou

What: Various skating related activities

Getting there: bus 917 from Tianqiao (天

桥) to Liangxiangbeiguan (良乡北关), then bus 6 to Qinglonghu; or take Jingshi Expressway, exit for Liangxiang Airport, drive on to Qinglonghu.

Admittance: 15 yuan

Contact: 60321706

Taoyuanxiangu-Ice Climbing Paradise

When: December 23, 2001-February 28, 2002.

Where: Taoyuanxiangu Scenic Spot, Miyun County.

What: Ice climbing, skating and visit local families.

Getting there: Dongmi (东密) bus from Dongzhimen to the scenic spot

Admittance: 21 yuan

Contact: 69050109

Alpine Skiing Competition at Shijinglong Ski Village

When: January 2001

Where: Shijinglong Ski Village, Yanqing County

What: Amateur and professional alpine skiing competition

Getting there: bus 919 from Deshengmen to Yanqing County, then bus 920 to the ski village

Admittance: 20 yuan

Contact: 69091617

Icefall Festival at Shidu

When: January 8, 2002-March 8, 2002

Where: Gushanzhai (孤山寨), Shidu Scenic Spot, Fangshan

What: Visitors can participate in ice and snow carving, admire the ice lanterns and experience the local customs.

Getting there: bus 917 from Tianqiao to Shidu then one more bus to Gushanzhai

Admittance: 25 yuan

Contact: 61348888, 61349708

Silver Tour in Pinggu

When: January 1, 2002-February 28, 2002

Where: Some famous scenic spots in Pinggu County

What: Admire peach blossom, silver thaw, icefall, glacier, ice crystal and ice columns; try delicious peaches; ski at the professional resort; visit the oldest water-eroded cave in Beijing; visit local families and try local food; set off firecrackers.

Getting there: Bus 918 from Dongzhimen to Pinggu, then tour bus to the scenic spots, one after another.

Admittance: 20 yuan for the big valley, 38 yuan for the water-eroded cave, five yuan for peach blossom garden, 60 yuan per day for stay with local families.

Contact: 89991180

Grassland Ice Lantern Festival in Yanqing

When: January 1, 2002-February 28, 2002

Where: Kangxi Grassland, Shijinglong Ski Resort, Badaling Great Wall and Longqing Gorge

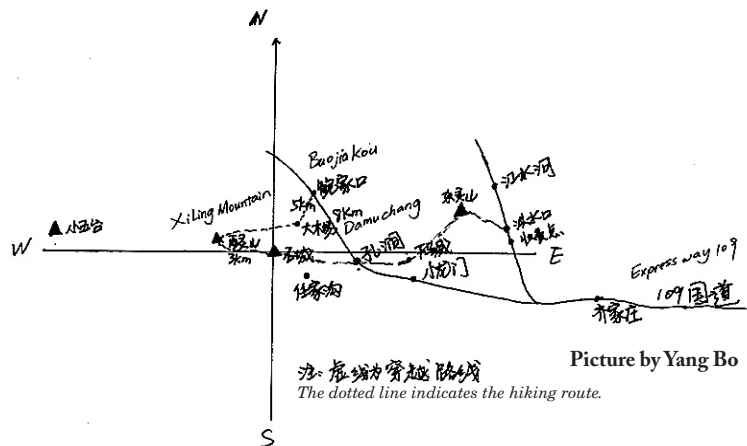
What: Visit lantern exhibitions; ski at Shijinglong Ski Resort; various games on the grassland

Getting there: bus 919 from Deshengmen to Yanqing, then bus 920 to the scenic spots, one after another.

Admittance: 50 yuan for Longqing Gorge; 20 yuan for Kangxi Grassland; 20 yuan for Shijinglong Ski Resort; 45 yuan for Badaling Great Wall.

Contact: 81191850

Yang's Holiday Adventure



By Yang Bo

Yang Bo and his companions are mountain lovers, and can tell you the details about most of Beijing's mountains, whether they be in developed or undeveloped tourism areas.

They have visited Xiling Mountain (西灵山), the highest mountain in Beijing Municipality, on several occasions. Xiling Mountain lies on the border of Beijing and Hebei Province, and is about 2410 meters high. Many historic ruins can be found hidden here and there around the mountain.

Recently, Yang and his companions tried a new hiking route, starting out in Hebei Province.

Leaving the Expressway 109 at the exit for Baojiakou (鲍家口) Village, they came to the ruins of a big temple after hiking for about one hour. The temple offers an ideal place for camping. An inscription on the tablet standing before the temple tells that it was built during the reign of the Emperor Tongzhi (1856-1874); a small temple was built concurrently for offering sacrifices to the same god on the top of Xiling Mountain, however this one collapsed a long time ago.

Damuchang (大木场), the village where the big temple stands, has a history of over 300 years. Some ten families inhabit the small village, and their ancestors all moved there from South China. You can visit a local family and try their food. A small path built for disciples to offer incense in the small temple leads to the top of the mountain, however it is badly damaged and quite overgrown in many parts. The hikers found that the small path was almost impossible to follow without the help of a local guide. Various

relics, including a nine-dragon tablet and some stone pagodas found occasionally along the way were an indication that they hadn't diverged too far from the path. The ruins of temple halls show that no less than six grand temples once stood on the mountainside.

Some four hours later, the hikers stood on the top of the



Stone pagoda built by the disciples

Photo by Yang Bo

mountain, where nothing much had changed since their last visit. The bricks of the collapsed temple are spread over half of the mountaintop area. This is a relatively easy hiking experience, but the historical relics encountered along the way make it well worthwhile.

Getting there: Take a taxi from Pingguoyuan (苹果园) Subway Station to Baojiakou Village (150 kilometers, 3 hours, 350 yuan)

Tips: The hiking will be much more difficult after snow; Watch out for wild animals.

For information about hiking in Beijing, please contact Yang Bo at 13501233717, or visit the website: www.travelphotograph.com

Day tour to Tongzhou



Photo by James Han

By James Han

Tongzhou (通州), a once-important military range, now is the least mentioned among all Beijing's main districts in tourist guidebooks. However given the important role it played historically, one can expect to find many valuable relics there. Buddhist Reliquary Stupa and Yongtong Bridge should be included in a one-day visit to Tongzhou.

Buddhist Reliquary Stupa

The ancient Chinese people believed that a stupa could subdue demons who lived in rivers, so most giant stupas were built beside big rivers as a means of protection. The Buddhist Reliquary Stupa in Tongzhou was built to maintain the peace of the famous Grand Canal. It once housed the relics of the Buddhist Randeng (燃灯 Lightening Lamp). Buddhist Randeng was said to be the master of Sakya-muni. When he was born, everything beside him shone like a lamp. So he was named Randeng. This stupa has a history of over 1300 years. It features 13 stories and is 53 meters in height. Some 400 Buddhist reliefs are carved on the stupa body and pedestal.

You can also find stone animals, imperial court official statues and the tomb of Lizhuowu

around the stupa.

Yongtong Bridge

Yongtong Bridge (永通桥) is as highly renowned as Marco Polo Bridge, in the western suburbs of Beijing. It was once one of the four ancient military bridges around Beijing. The bridge, 50 meters in length and 16 meters in width, has three arches. The largest arch is about 8.5 meters high and the other two, 3.5 meters. Some one hundred stone carved lions, none alike, adorn this impressive structure, similar to the Marco Polo Bridge.

Details of the tour:

9am, set off from downtown Beijing; 9:45am, arrive at the Buddhist Reliquary Stupa in Xihai Park; visit the stupa, the tomb of Lizhuowu, the stone statues and the old temple; 11:30am-12:30pm, lunch; 12:30pm-1:30pm, visit the Tongzhou Museum; 1:30pm-2:30pm, visit Yongtong Bridge on the way back to Beijing.

For more information please contact James Han at 66063733



Photo by James Han